

Charmed

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Charmed

by [icedcoffeeee](#)

Summary

They were supposed to be academic rivals but when did feelings seep their way into the two of them?

Some classic enemies to lovers stuff but set in Hogwarts ;)

please do not mention this work to the content creators and if they have any objection to it, i'll delete it <3

(note- they are all approximately the same age in this fic)

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Why does nothing good ever last?

Why does everything have to come to an end?

Why is it that nothing good ever lasts?

As George gripped the metallic handle of the Hogwarts Express to board it one last time before beginning his final year, he could not help but feel the metal sting just a little bit colder than it usually did.

This was it. He was nearing the end of his life as a student and nothing he had ever felt was more bittersweet.

He had almost teared up when he had found his new '*prefect*' badge in the mail a few days ago. He was going to miss that too. Being sorted into Ravenclaw had been a matter of great pride for him when he had first stepped into his years of magical education. His happiness knew no bounds when he became its prefect.

Everything was so perfect it had hurt. This was going to end in approximately a year too.

Karl had asked him to find them a compartment as he wanted to walk his boyfriend Nick to his own before they parted for the rest of the journey. George had gladly agreed. He knew how much his mousy-haired best friend loved that guy. Besides, Slytherin and Ravenclaw compartments were on the opposite ends of the train so they would not be able to see each other in between even if they wanted to. The chaperons on guard would never allow that even to seventh years like themselves.

As George looked around for seats, he almost did not notice the dirty blond head he would avoid even in sleep.

Dream.

George had almost always been at the top of all his classes and when he wasn't, Dream was. He was the only person in their entire year who caught up to the near-perfect grades George always managed to bag. No one else even lurked nearby.

The problem, however, was not the competition. It all started getting on his nerves the moment Dream decided to be cocky about the whole situation, which was always. Whenever he would do better than George, he made it a point to ensure that the boy was reminded of it throughout the week. He would call it out to him in hallways, write it on parchment and throw it at him in classes, and it only became insurmountably worse when the entire Slytherin table joined him in doing it.

Slytherins. What else could he even expect?

He had no idea what he was doing in his House's boogie, standing right in front of the only empty compartment. He had his back to George, who would rather try adjusting with other students in their compartments at this point than ask Dream to move.

He could not do it. Karl would never let him hear the end of it.

Inhaling deeply, he lifted an arm to tap on the black-cloaked shoulder. He did not even have the chance to fully turn around when George began speaking.

"I need to get into that compartment."

A smug smile made its way on his lips, his eyes running down George's robes for a quick, fleeting second but shot back up.

"Acknowledged." He spoke, making no attempt to move from his place. Instead, he crossed his arms in front of his chest and took up even more space.

"You're supposed to move, Dream," George spoke. "What are you doing in here anyway?"

"In case you've gone blind, I'm the Head Boy this year. I can be in whichever compartment I please."

George's eyes flicked down at the badge pinned to his chest and sure enough, instead of his jade prefect's badge of Slytherin from last year, a sophisticated, shiny Head Boy badge decorated Dream's dark robes.

How much cocaine did the teachers consume before making the decision to appoint Dream as Hogwarts's Head Boy?

"Happy for me?"

"Just move already." George was curt, but he was trying his best to be even-tempered. The last thing he wanted was to hand Dream what he wanted- a rise from him.

The girl he had been talking to tugged at his sleeve, asking him to revert his attention back to her, but he ignored her like a speck of dust.

"Be nice to me about it. Did mum not teach you manners?"

George's skin turned scarlet as he heard the people around him laugh at Dream's comment. He rummaged through his head for an appropriate response and just when he thought he had found one, Karl came up behind him.

"Nick's looking for you. They're playing something back there." He informed Dream.

"Aw shucks. I was having fun here. Get in your compartment, princess." He spoke, winking down at George before moving aside finally.

At this point, George could not contain himself any longer and as soon as he found Dream had walked a few steps away from him, he gave his wand a gentle flick, mumbling a soft '*Locomotor Mortis*' under his breath.

Dream stumbled down and fell face-first onto the floor of the train, eliciting laughter from those around them.

George hurriedly slipped inside the compartment doors as Karl with his hysterical laugh joined him, patting his back for good work.

"I'll get you back for this, Davidson!" He heard Dream call from outside and he could not help but roll his eyes at that.

He was the one who started it. George was only returning the favor. It was only fair, wasn't it?

what goes around, comes around

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George knew he needed to be making his way to the prefects' carriage but he could not bring himself to do it. Why did Dream have to be the Head Boy? It was bad enough already and the last thing he wanted to do was take orders from the one person who managed to fiddle with his nerves like no one else could.

At some point, other friends of Karl's that George could only call an acquaintance at best, had joined them in their coach. It was so much easier to just stay here, laughing and joking with these people over shared chocolate frogs and butter beer.

But he had to leave.

Like every year, the Head Boy and Girl were supposed to be briefing the others about their general and specific duties. He would totally mess up his schedule for the entire year if he missed out on this particular meeting. Besides, he did not want to be giving Dream another reason to bug him about.

With the help of the others, he successfully drew his trunk out before taking their leave and walking over to the carriage at the absolute end of the train. When he had first become a prefect, he had fallen down a gazillion times while carrying his luggage to the prefects' coach with the train's floor shaking like there was no tomorrow.

Now he was almost an expert at making his way through the trembling passages. As soon as he was in there, Darryl got up to wrap him in a short, warm embrace, before taking some of his baggage. The Hufflepuff prefect had always done this for him and for others. He knew George liked to be seated by the windows, so he had saved him a berth exactly there.

"I love you so much, Darryl. Thank you." George spoke once he was seated comfortably with him, Zak, and Niki.

"It's no worries, Gogy."

Him and Zak had always been unspeakably cute together but George had never had the courage to ask if they were dating. He watched as Darryl casually slipped his hand into Zak's.

"Who do you think the new Slytherin prefect would be? Minx was anxious about being paired up with someone weird." Niki asked as she fixed her gold and yellow badge for the millionth time. Some badges just never stayed upright. They always lulled down to a side from the moment one put them on.

"Let me get that for you." Darryl offered and with a swish of his wand, his co-prefect's badge was fixed.

She tossed him a chocolate frog in gratitude but Zak grabbed it before he could. As the two of them playfully wrestled for the confectionery, George heard a very familiar voice yell '*Silencio!*'.

In a breath, all movement and sound came to a halt and from the corner of his eye, George saw a tall figure walk past their compartment, his robes flowing behind him like a dark shadow.

Dream.

Caroline followed him with quick, sure steps and George wondered if she was the Head Girl. His assumption was proven right when he saw her badge shine as all the seventh-year prefects assembled in the biggest compartment of the carriage for the meeting.

It was worse than George had estimated it to be. He had thought that at some level, he would be able to make peace with the fact that he was Dream's subordinate now, that it would turn out to be fine, with his annoyance levels being moderate at best.

He had been so wrong.

He could not help but wish with every ounce of his to leave the carriage as he saw the blond whip out instruction after instruction. It began with him going over the general discipline maintenance duties but as soon as he started addressing people specifically, George lost it.

How messed up were his stars that he had to take commands from Dream of all people?

"Greg," Dream spoke to him with a smug look suddenly lighting up his face.

"George," He corrected.

Why did he have to be here again?

"You'll be helping Professor Phil with the Astronomy and Divination charts."

George resisted the urge to roll his eyes. Was this guy being serious?

"I suck at Divination," He protested. "I can't do that."

"I wasn't asking you, George," Dream sneered at him and George saw the mischief in his jade eyes pool darker. This was exactly what he had been hoping to avoid all this while. "I was telling you."

Dream knew that George was scared of the dark and helping with Astronomy charts meant spending a lot of time in it. He could not say that out loud. Not when Dream could tease him publicly about it.

What did he ever do to deserve landing himself in this situation?

"Do I get a partner?" George inquired, trying his hardest to not look down and shrink into himself. After everything, the last thing he wanted was to let his body cower under the death stare Dream had been maintaining.

Dream took a slow step towards him, making the fact that he practically towered over George painfully obvious to him. He hated these physical reminders of just how easy it was to assume authority over him.

"Why? Are you scared?" His voice was lower, almost teetering on the edge of being hoarse. The undertones of mockery were not unclear to George.

"You gave everyone else one," George spoke. "It's only fair if I get someone assigned too."

For a moment Dream shut his eyes and George knew he had, at last, succeeded in rendering him speechless, at least temporarily. Dream could not refuse him this.

"I don't think anyone is left unassigned. You will have to do it alone." Dream declared and dread

began to pool deep in George's stomach.

"You didn't assign anything to yourself, Dream," Caroline prompted from behind them.

Dream turned around quicker than lightning, fixing the Head Girl with a glare but Caroline returned it with equal, if not more fire.

"I can't do it with him." Dream declared.

"Why not? Everyone's doing something. You can't escape getting a task just because you're the Head Boy."

Dream had to shut up at that. He knew there was no rational argument he could present here to get himself out of this deadlock.

Meanwhile, George stood absolutely still, the dread inside of him branching out into his lungs and running mercilessly through his veins. His mind was a constant chant of *no, no, no, not him. Not him. Not him.*

His throat felt so tight, he could not bring himself to swallow the lump that had formed there.

"I don't get Divination at all! I'd make a mess there." Dream reasoned but as soon as the words were out of his mouth, he realized how stupidly hypocritical he sounded.

"That's what George said but you handed him the duty anyway," She said. "Deal with it."

Had this been happening to any other person, George would have been amused out of his mind to see Dream getting so brutally checked. But not right now. Not when the consequences involved him spending hours with his archenemy after classes, doing fucking *Divination* of all things. All the year round.

As he watched everyone leave, George could not bring himself to move a limb and surprisingly, Dream made no effort to do so either.

"What goes around, comes around I guess," George muttered.

"Did you seriously just quote a muggle saying at me?"

"Shut up."

*

Chapter End Notes

thanks so much for taking the time to read this! let me know how you like it in the comments <3

also, this work in no way intends to portray the actual personalities of the content creators mentioned.

get away

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Why did the universe reject his plans every time?

All he had asked for was a peaceful, happy final year but now he was stuck. Having to spend an ungodly amount of hours with the person he could not bear to be around for even a single minute, was going to suck more than he could ever imagine.

“What did that tart ever do to you?” Karl asked from beside him, his nose scrunched up in mock disgust.

The Great Hall was warm and buzzing with life. The enchanted night sky ceiling had never failed to amaze George but today, he could not bring himself to think about it. He looked down at his plate only to find that he had been mindlessly stabbing the little sweet dish with his fork.

He wordlessly finished it up as an elf passed by, looking at him expectantly. He tossed the little creature a few crumbs before setting his plate aside for good.

“I’ve been given Astronomy and Divination duty this year,” George spoke.

His eyes remained fixed on the table. Suddenly every single sound was more apparent, almost to a painful extent. He wanted nothing more than to leave and settle in a quieter place but he knew he could not. Not yet.

“Why didn’t they give you Potions or Arithmancy? You’re much better at those.”

“How could you imagine Dream making my life easier?” George asked. “I don’t even have Divination as a NEWTs subject for fuck’s sake!”

Karl only put an arm around him at that and pulled him closer. George rested his head on his best friend’s slender shoulder, suddenly realizing how very heavy it felt.

“I hope you’re partnered up with someone nice at least.”

“You have no fucking idea.” George groaned and proceeded to tell him all about all that went down in the Prefects’ carriage.

*

It should be illegal to carry something as voluminous and illegally heavy as the Arithmancy book. George struggled to not bend over and fall, or worse, drop the book. He loved himself a good, lengthy volume but to carry it was equally dreadful. He wasn’t physically competent for that. When he’d be Minister for Magic, he’d hire a person just to carry his precious books for him.

Karl called it laziness, he called it creating jobs.

“Someone’s looking cute trying not to die.”

George heard a terribly familiar voice call from behind him and when he intentionally did not respond, Dream caught up with his step. George was almost envious of how easily he carried his own volume as if it were feather-light, and of the swell of his biceps. He wondered if that was why

he did not have his cloak on, to flex like the cheeky prick he was.

“Fuck off before I make you kiss the floor again.” George countered.

“I’m beginning to think if that’s a kink of yours,” Dream teased. "You know, seeing people on the floor/"

George only rolled his eyes and tried walking faster but soon realized that it might prove fatal. He had the total lung capacity of a goldfish out of the water and he swore that if they did not reach the classroom soon, he would be arriving in a coffin.

“You’re such a slow walker.” Dream taunted, not even bothering to hide his amused chuckle.

“Carry me, then.”

That shut him up. George’s moments of victory were numbered though and soon enough Dream spoke again.

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you?”

“I’d like to be carried. Not particularly by you, but since you’ve got such a problem with-” George began but was forced to stop as soon as he walked right into another person. He stumbled back and his eyes widened in horror as he saw their Arithmancy Professor standing before him. They had reached the room, how did he never realize that?

“Too busy talking, are we?” The balding man spoke, his speculating gaze burning its way through the two of them.

“I’m sorry profess-”

“Ten points from Ravenclaw and Slytherin each. Go seat yourselves.”

George bit the inside of his cheek as he sped past the professor and took the only empty seat, next to Wilbur. His brows knit into a frown as he saw Slytherin’s prefect badge pinned to his chest. He mentally smacked himself for being so lost in his ever-raging hatred for Dream that he never noticed who the new prefect for that House was.

As soon as he began solving the first series of sums, a ball of parchment hit his leg and he furiously picked it up, knowing who it was from. Unfolding the parchment, he let out a sigh as he found the messy drawl he recognized from his nightmares.

I’m worth those ten points, stop being such a bitch about it ;)

He looked over to where Dream was seated, Nick chuckling next to him.

He hated it.

He hated how he knew exactly what strings to pull and his smug smile and most of all, he hated how he got away with it. How George let him get away with it, simply because he couldn’t always conjure up the best comebacks and Dream always seemed to have them right in his pocket, patiently waiting to be thrown at George.

All he could do was flash him a quick middle finger before he turned back to his work.

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Chapter End Notes

i hope you're liking what you read so far! Let me know what you think in the comments :) Take care and stay safe x

thundering

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The common room was surprisingly emptier than he thought and George took his usual place by the window. He had almost forgotten how tiring a day of classes really was. He stared at his pile of books and waiting parchment, the inkpot and quills placed dangerously close to the table's edge. A single careless movement and it would all spill. Maybe that was true for him too.

He did not have it in him to get started with his homework, the swirling dark clouds outside and chill wind slipping in through the window certainly did not help his cause. All he wanted was some warm tea, but leaving to the kitchens meant there was a high possibility he would wander out into the grounds for a walk and not return until very late.

Sighing, he picked up his Defense Against the Dark Arts book and some parchment to begin the essay he was supposed to be writing. Was the entire year going to be so packed with work? Surely it had to get better or his sanity would desert him gradually but completely.

The clouds had begun their low rumble at some point but George was too lost in his essay to care.

Soon, it would rain.

"Did you get excused from the Astronomy and Divination duty today?" Karl asked.

George looked up with a start. He had not realized when the other boy had slipped into the chair in front of his, sipping something from a mug.

"I would've liked some tea too, you know," George spoke, feigning hurt.

Karl only pointed a finger toward his table and to George's surprise, there rested a porcelain mug on his table, fingers of steam rising from it. He loved his best friend. Sometimes.

"It's milk, there was no tea."

"That's fine, thanks."

Only when George wrapped his fingers around it did he realize how cold they had gone.

"You never answered me," Karl pointed out.

"Hm? Oh, I didn't get any such notice, why'd you think that?"

"It's thundering, how would you ever see the stars?"

George sipped from his mug. Karl did have a point but he guessed he would have to just go and find out. He did have the pass which Professor Phil gave him that afternoon in the Great Hall to carry whenever he was coming to the Astronomy Tower.

He looked over at the great, grandfather clock ticking away in the common room. There was still some time before he left.

“You’ve been so out of everything lately, are you okay?” Karl asked.

George’s eyes snapped back to his best friend. There was genuine concern knitted into his brows and pooling in his eyes and he did not know what to tell him.

“Yeah... Yeah. Don’t worry about me.”

“Is the entire Dream thing bothering you that much?”

“Karl, there’s no ‘*Dream thing*’. He’s been up my ass for practically all my time here. I handled him then, I can do it now. It’s just...” He began but trailed off, knowing no way to phrase what he wanted to say without sounding absolutely crazy.

“I’m listening.”

“I hate it when things don’t go exactly how I like. This was not what I wanted for myself. I wanted to continue with Potions duty, after all, that’s what I want to probably do after I’m done with here. Wouldn’t it be nice to pitch in as much experience as I can? But fuck Mr. Head Boy and his obsession with making me miserable.”

Karl only looked at him, his eyes softening into a knowing expression. He bit his lip, trying his best not to crack a smile and George rolled his eyes so far back into his head he was afraid they would never return.

“Go on, laugh. I know serious things trigger you that way.”

And that was all it took for Karl to burst out in a fit of his famous contagious laughter. George could not help but smile too as he watched his best friend fall off of his chair and onto the carpeted floor. The people around them began looking their way, some frowning, but most laughing along with Karl. That was what this sunshine of a boy always did- lighten up every single room no matter what.

“I’m... I’m sorry...” He panted in between and someone threw him a water bottle to calm himself down.

How did this guy have friends in every corner of the planet?

“It’s fine. You don’t really have control over it.”

He watched as Karl sipped water, a little stream trickling down the side of his mouth as well.

Could he not be more civil with it?

“Let things flow for once, George,” Karl said, wiping his mouth on his sleeve. “You don’t always have to have the reins.”

George could only stare at the boy he had practically grown up with. Was Nick teaching him all of this?

“Whatever. Look away, your eyes are too gray,” That was all he could manage to speak in response.

“What does that even mean?” Karl said and before he had even finished, another fit of giggles shook his entire body.

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Chapter End Notes

hey! so we are another chapter down! thanks for reading this work and giving it your time <3 don't forget to comment and let me know what you think!

Also, hit me up on Twitter @ IcedTales
I post updates regarding all of my works there!

pocket

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Why did the clouds have to be so loud? They had made their point, it had begun storming. Could they keep shut now?

George clutched the pass in his hand tightly, his other one pressed to his wand inside his robes. He walked as swiftly as he could, the wind coming in sharp and cold at him. The walk from one tower to another had never seemed longer.

There was a loud bang, and as the clouds exploded, he felt sprays of water make themselves home on his body. Why did Mr. Filch never close the huge windows?

A chill ran down his spine as he saw that the following corridor had no lit torches on the walls and all that ensued was absolute darkness. Carefully, he drew out his wand.

“Lumos.”

The tip lit up with a gentle, white glow, illuminating just a lit bit of space in front of him. At this point, he would give anything to go back to the dorms and snuggle in his bed to read a book.

He knew he was not far from where the Tower now, his gut told him as much even though there was little he could see. Just as he was about to turn the corner, he was pressed against the wall. His wand slipped from his hand and before he could scream, a strong hand covered his mouth.

“Hey, it’s just me!” A familiar voice spoke and George did not have to see his face to recognize him.

“Noah, what the fuck?”

Noah had restored his still lit wand from the floor and in its light, his face came into view.

“I... I just wanted to talk.”

“You could have chosen a better place and time, you know,” George said, gently taking his wand back from the other one.

“I never seem to get you alone. I was passing from around here and saw you and I thought-”

“Get to the point, Noah. I have somewhere I need to be.”

“Can we... Can we continue what we started before the year ended?”

George sighed. He was not ready for this conversation yet but he knew Noah would not be going away without an answer. The truth was, he knew what he wanted. He just did not know how to say it without making the other boy feel rejected.

“I think I was clear about our... situation, in my owl.”

“You were, but will you please reconsider?” Noah almost whispered, his hand reaching up to cup his face. “I really liked what we had, George.”

George almost looked down as he felt the weight of Noah's dark gaze, pressing upon him invisibly. What they had, had been really nice, true.

But he did not know if he could keep it up without things going downhill at some point and ruining both his and the other one's NEWTs.

"Think about it, okay?" Noah spoke when he did not, and before George knew it, he was kissed on the cheek and left alone.

George knew he ought to be going but his legs felt frozen. He thought he had settled everything well before coming to school for his last year, but as it seemed, every single situation in his life was intent on tangling further and further into a coil.

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When George entered the Divination room at the top of the winding stairs, he saw the Professor bent over a teacup, magnifying glass in hand. He wrote something down on a parchment sheet next to him from time to time, before returning back to his tea-leaf reading.

He was not sure if Dream had even bothered to be here, judging by the still raging storm outside. He could have had the same reasoning as Karl and stayed in.

"Professor?" George prompted from the door.

The man looked up, his round, gold-rimmed glasses perched atop his nose. He did not seem to recognize George at first, but then, as though a spark of recognition lit up all his nerves, and he set his cup aside.

"George! I did not expect you to make it today. The storm's pretty rough, eh?"

"I'm here, sir. What should I begin with?" He asked, walking up to the middle of the room where the man was seated. He handed George a set of constellation charts, silver ink, and quill, asking him to retrace the faded constellation patterns on them.

This was why he knew he would hate helping out with Divination. These tasks seemed absolutely useless to him. Had he been in Potions, Professor Durham would have asked him to brew something for him or test out if two potions were compatible. In Arithmancy, he would have been asked to do complex calculations, or help the professor make test papers for his juniors.

But here, in Divination, he had to fucking draw lines on charts he could not care less about. Gritting his teeth, he set to work. He had never been good at detailed, intricate work such as this but there was no choice. If he fucked up the charts, he had already warned the professor during their first meet that he sucked at Divination. The man had only smiled and said, "You'll be fine."

George hoped that the professor realized just how terrible he was at this so he would be let off this duty and sent somewhere else. Just as he had dipped his quill in the inkpot, he heard the chair next to his being pulled back.

"Five year olds do a better job at drawing, George."

Of course. J

ust when he thought that he at least had some private time at hand, Dream had to appear and fuck that up too.

“I have not even started yet.”

“I know. I’m just stating facts.” Dream spoke.

George just sighed, abandoning his quill and setting his head down on the table, atop his folded arms. He did not have the energy to deal with the other boy today. Noah should not have come tonight.

“Are you sick?” Dream asked when he registered no reply from George.

“What will you take to shut the fuck up?”

“I’ll see how you shut me up when I score more than you in Charms next week.”

Charms.

George had almost forgotten that they were supposed to be taking a test in it.

“If I score better, will you leave me alone?” George asked.

“Probably. What do I get if you lose?”

“What can I give you?”

Dream seemed to consider that for a moment. George felt his jade eyes focusing on him, not necessarily staring, just thinking. For someone who had not even begun studying the copious amounts of the syllabus for the test, he sure had very confidently agreed to this bet. He was going to have a hell time perfecting everything so he did not lose out on points anywhere.

Dream was an absolute genius at Charms and George felt a little overwhelmed at the prospect of competing against him for this one. But no matter what happened, he would never admit it out loud.

“I’ll pocket the favor and redeem it whenever I want.”

“Fine,” George huffed out. “You won’t get it in the first place. I’m absolutely killing you.”

“We’ll see,” Dream spoke and they went to work in silence, with him occasionally trying to mess up George’s charts.

Chapter End Notes

hello <3

i hope you're all doing well. Thankyou for reading this work and giving it your time :)
I'm so glad to have you here! I love it when my readers engage with me in the comments so feel free to say hi!

Also, my twitter is @ IcedTales, check that out for more of my stuff if you like what you're reading at the moment <3

Take care, you're loved and appreciated :)

kinder

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He should never have made that stupid bet. For the past two hours, he had been sitting in the cold library, trying to make sense of what his Charms book said, but he just could not bring himself to concentrate. There was tons to be done and his brain was rejecting all requests of cooperation.

He watched Karl and Nick nestled together in a nook close to him, kissing more than getting any actual work done. He was surprised the librarian had not spotted them yet and requested their detention.

George ticked off answers to practice questions, almost ripping his hair out when every third one sent him flipping through the text.

Sometimes he wished he could trade lives with one of his friends. They had no pressure to outdo themselves, they worked whenever they wanted, they felt no obligation to please anyone, and they did not have an arse of a bully to deal with.

Sighing, he dragged his quill upon the paper, scribbling out some notes in the margins of his book.

“Who did this to you, Dream?” He heard Nick exclaim and his head shot up.

There stood his tall frame, dark robes covered in a sheen of dust in patches. His hair was a bird’s nest at this point and when he held up his palms they were filled with scratches that ran all the way up his arms. At least that was what George could see until Dream’s skin gave way to the folded fabric of his shirt.

“I fell off of my broom in Quidditch practice today. These little fuckers hurt like anything.” He spoke as he traced with his finger, one of the longest scratches that ran from the inside of his wrist and disappeared into his clothes. George could almost feel the angry, red lines stinging himself. Although he never played, he was extremely prone to paper cuts.

If those hurt him like a bitch, he could not imagine how irritating these might be.

“But you never fall! What went wrong today?” Nick asked, letting go of Karl’s hand, much to the other boy’s disappointment.

George could only chuckle at the nasty glares Karl was sending Dream’s way.

“What are you laughing at, Davidson?”

George resisted the urge to hide behind something. He really was in no mood for bickering with Dream but he had brought this upon himself.

“Come here,” George said.

“What?”

“I think I made perfect sense.”

Disbelievingly, Dream took cautious steps toward him until he was stood opposite to George. As soon as he drew his wand out, Dream went right back to where he was, his eyes widening.

“What the fuck do you think you’re doing?” He spoke, barely containing his voice. They were lucky that the librarian was taking rounds in a faraway section.

“Trust me this once. If I hurt you, Nick can seek whatever revenge he sees fit on your behalf.”

“Oh, I love this.” Nick said, cracking his knuckles and sitting up straighter.

“No, stop!” Karl prompted, pulling his boyfriend back into him. “You’re not doing anything like that!”

“It’s fine, Karl,” George reassured. “I know what I’m doing.”

Dream was still unsure about it, but he stepped forward nonetheless. George took hold of his wrist with nimble fingers and raised it.

“Does it hurt that much?” He asked when he heard Dream’s breath hitch.

“No.” He let out a small cough. “ Was this your excuse to touch me?”

George could only roll his eyes at that before touching the tip of his wand to the injured skin and whispering, “*Episkey.*”

To Dream’s surprise, all the scratches and cuts began to fade into his flesh until there was no sign of them ever being there. All that was left on him was the dust from the grounds. As Dream flexed the fingers on his other hand, George could not help but notice the prominent, blue-ish veins that intersected each other on his pale skin, forming their own little web, and how they ran down his arm, in lanes and tracks.

Why could George never develop any of those things on his body that everyone seemed to find so attractive, and why did Dream of all people, happen to possess every single one of them?

“How much longer do you want to hold my hand?” Dream asked, his ever-irritating cocky smirk replacing the awed expression he had had just seconds ago.

It was then that George realized that he had never let go of his wrist.

He moved away so quickly, almost as if he was singed by Dream’s presence. He could feel the familiar heat crawl up his neck and spread all over his face. He did not need a mirror to know that he was blushing hopelessly and looked away.

“I still can’t believe you just healed me.”

“Whatever, you wouldn’t stop being a baby about it and I really need to study.” George reasoned.

He saw Dream peer into his book before his quill was snatched away in a fluid motion from him. The Head Boy leaned down and wrote something in a relatively free margin. When he was done, he tossed the quill at George’s face, before giving Nick a fist- bump and walking out of the library.

George looked down to see an acronym scribbled in a surprisingly neat hand, its expanded form resting beside it.

He had just helped George with a list of spells he was struggling to remember. Of course, he was Dream- the first to notice all of George’s flaws, and never afraid to slam them at his face.

Only this time, he was kinder.

*

Chapter End Notes

thanks so much for reading! let me know how you liked it in the comments and come say hi on Twitter @ IcedTales!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

On some days, no place felt more like home than the Great Hall. On others, George got terribly anxious by the near-constant buzz of voices forming the essence of the place.

Today, the case with him was the latter.

He desperately tried to pay attention to what Darryl was going on about, but he kept getting distracted by his racing heart, the sweat coating his palms, and the sudden shortage of air. He had decided to ditch the Ravenclaw table for the Hufflepuff one on this particular day since Karl had an early Herbology class. He had no appetite but he knew he ought to eat if he wished to not have an unwelcome ache in his stomach later.

“What do you think, George?” He heard Darryl ask and jumped up at the sound of his name.

“About what?”

“About Dream being the Head Boy but all he does is fish out commands and never follow a single one of them on his own.”

He felt a sour taste mix into his mouth. For some strange reason, he did not feel like he wanted to support the claim or particularly partake in that conversation.

He was tired, that had to be it.

“I think he’s more of a strategist than an operator. Besides, the main job of the heads of the student council is figuring out what needs to be done and making sure it happens. If he’s doing that well enough, we can’t really complain about much.”

“But doesn’t that contradict Professor McGonagall’s claim of everyone in the student council being equal? This clearly puts him and Caroline in a profoundly superior position.” Niki refuted.

“If he had to make strategies *and* work the same amount as us, would that be equality then?”

That put everyone’s speech to a halt. They still were not absolutely satisfied but truths did not owe it to anyone to keep them satisfied. They were just facts. You either dealt with them or looked stupid protesting.

“Besides, he does carry out some duties. He works Astron and Div with me.” George declared, anxiously folding and unfolding a random piece of parchment he had gotten hold of when no one supplied to the conversation.

What he noticed when he looked up though, was that no one was looking at him, but rather at some point behind. He turned his head around, to see the very subject of their table conversation right behind him.

So this was why they were not pitching in their ever-present thoughts. How did he gain the esteem to think it was because *he* presented a fabulous argument?

George had always been bad at reading people. He could reason with them, but he needed verbal

cues. Nonverbal cues just got past him as though he were a transparent ghost of the castle. Consequently, he could not fathom what Dream was really thinking as he virtually pinned George with a gaze he had never been subjected to from anyone.

Had he heard the entirety of his conversation with his friends? Was he annoyed?

He felt his throat constrict even further. He needed to get out of here.

“Nick had accidentally taken Karl’s ring yesterday. I couldn’t find him in the hall so I thought if you’d give it back to him?”

“Why... why doesn’t Nick do it on his own?”

“They kind of had a row last night.”

Karl had not told him anything like that. George sighed before holding out his palm and Dream carefully dropped a silver skull ring on it. As the Head Boy turned to leave, George did not miss the smirk that had been shot his way.

He had heard everything.

How was he ever going to recover from the embarrassment of defending his archenemy right in front of him?

Was defending your archenemy anywhere even something that archenemies did?

*

“How did roasting Davidson go? I didn’t see the Hufflepuffs cracking up,” Nick asked when he returned to their table.

“That’s because I didn’t,” Dream replied, suddenly finding his plate of cheese sandwiches to be the most interesting thing on the planet.

“You do realize he’s going to find out that we never had a row right? You might as well have roasted him.”

Dream knew. He also knew that George would probably wonder why he had come with the ring and not Nick if that was the case. If he had done what he had originally intended to, George would at least know that it was just him and his usual arse behavior that the ring served to facilitate. But what now?

“What did you do over there then?”

“I returned the ring, that’s all.”

“But-”

“Can you really not think of anything else to talk about?” Dream snapped and watched as Nick struggled to find some other topic of conversation.

It was funny, how he could intimidate people like that, how he could get them to do what he wanted just by merely wording it in a specific tone. Maybe he was a bigger arse to George for that very reason. He simply refused to submit so easily, and when he did, it was never unconditionally.

Divination was going to be interesting tonight.

Chapter End Notes

hey! so we are another chapter down and it's honestly so nice seeing everyone support this fic so unconditionally! Thankyou for everything and let me know if you liked this one in the comments <3

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deal

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"I think he was in a pissy mood when he made the questionnaire," Karl spoke as he put his head down on the table, defeated.

"I know right. The test had no business being this tough."

George sat in silence as he watched his friends whine and complain about their Charms test. He was absolutely bummed by it too but he would never admit it. He had done the best that he could, but this time, there was something at stake.

He did not dare turn around to glance at Dream and his friends occupying the hind part of the classroom. He did not want to see if he had done better or worse than the other boy.

He turned his quill around in his fingers, biting the inside of his cheek. If he lost, would Dream go easy on him? He probably would not. He had never been merciful, how could George hope for it now?

"Are you coming with us?" He heard Karl ask.

"Where?"

"We're going to get some tea,"

"I can't," George replied. "I need some time on my own."

"Is everything alright? Do you feel sick?"

He said he didn't and his best friend did not push him, as he wished. Karl promised to bring some muffins back for him and he could not help but shoot him a small smile at that. The world didn't deserve Karl.

He scooped up his books and stationery in his arms but as he made to move, Noah joined him.

"Walk with me?" Noah asked.

He did not want to.

"Yeah, sure," George replied, forever the one to have a hard time with his boundaries and they stepped out of the class together.

"Noah, I don't have an answer yet, if that's what you're here to ask."

"No, no, no. I just thought maybe I could spend some time with you," He said. "How was your test?"

That took George aback. Ever since he had known Noah, their friendship had been about little else other than sex. They had never exactly hung out, only met in the dark, never talked about anything much other than their carnal desires and when they should be meeting up next. It had been so convenient for them both.

"It... it was alright. Yours?"

"I'm so failing." He said, making George crack a smile.

He did not know what to say at this point. He never did, let alone with someone who he never really spoke to unless he had a purpose in mind. They walked in silence, a contrast to the buzzing hallway. How did people always have so much to say to each other?

"I had a dream about you the other day."

"I hope I wasn't doing anything too embarrassing," George spoke.

"No," Noah chuckled. "We were just holding hands for some reason and it was snowing."

"Oh," George felt multiple degrees warmer. Now that he thought about it, he had never really held anyone's hand. Karl did it all the time with him, but it wasn't the same as holding your crush's or boyfriend's, was it?

He did not have any feelings for Noah. He was attracted to him and that was it. All he feared was that he might develop them should this continue and he could not afford that at this point.

But then again, he saw so many others, getting into relationships, or other arrangements such as the one he and Noah had, and still doing perfectly fine in their lives. He wanted to let go for once but he wasn't sure if this was the time- if he could really do it.

He struggled to listen as Noah went on about the Quidditch match Slytherin was going to play against Gryffindor next week. George did not even know what position he played in.

"You'll come to see it, won't you?"

"I'll try, Quidditch isn't necessarily my thing."

"What is your thing then?" Noah asked and George absolutely did not miss the flirtatious undertones.

They stopped before the staircase that led up to the Ravenclaw common room, lingering by the railings. George's fingers touched the front of Noah's robes and he could not help but smile when he saw the other guy blush.

"I'll come to see you. After the match maybe."

"Are you suggesting...?"

"Just sex, Noah. Nothing more. Like always."

"Like always. Right."

They stood there, saying nothing for a while. George wondered if he would regret this later, he probably would, but at this point, he wanted to give it a single, last try before he really decided upon anything.

"We're not making this last the entire term though, it's more like a one-time thing for me right now. Some stress relief. Is that okay?" George declared. He loved this aspect of his situation with Noah. He could be absolutely upfront about it all because there were no feelings involved to hurt. They just needed to place their desires on the table and the other could choose to either accept them as they were or walk away from it.

He thought he saw Noah's smile falter but before he could be sure, it was back up again.

"Alright with me, as long as it's you."

He was not sure what the last part meant really but there was no point pondering over it. The deal had been made. Everything was falling back into place once again and George was determined to fix it all as much as he could.

Chapter End Notes

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hearth

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Today's task was surprisingly better. George was supposed to make a star chart with coordinates as Dream supplied him with information, peering through his telescope. Professor Phil had gone off to the Headmistress and would probably not be back for a while, something about a prophecy coming to fruition soon. These discussions never were brief.

The air tonight was too cold for George's liking but he sat nonetheless, drawing his cloak closer to him every now and then, while Dream stood with his own discarded on another chair.

"Change the coordinates for Sirius. What the fuck have you written?" Dream remarked when he turned around and glanced at George's chart.

"It's too cold. Don't expect me to be efficient."

"It's not, you're just a wuss."

George rubbed his hands together, hoping to unfreeze them somehow but it was not working. He looked up to see the stars twinkling, almost mocking him like Dream was. He was not a wuss. It was cold tonight, at least for him.

"Damn it, you're hopeless." Dream declared before fetching the black piece of apparel from his chair and throwing it at George. It landed squarely on his head, completely blocking his vision till he wrenched it off of him.

"Why are you throwing things at me?"

"Wear it, you idiot."

George let out a disbelieving laugh. Was Dream serious?

"I'm not wearing YOUR cloak."

"You wouldn't say that if you saw how many people would kill to be in your shoes right now." Dream challenged.

"Too bad for you that I'm not one of them." George retorted and tossed the cloak back at Dream.

Dream tried his best to keep his calm but George always had his way of pushing his buttons and eliciting the worst out of him. The smaller boy did not even have to try all that hard- just a few words and he had Dream struggling to desperately seize the power back between the two of them.

"That's not what it looked like this morning in the Great Hall."

He knew he had pushed George's limits with this and he did not regret it. Dream saw him go absolutely still, his pale cheekbones swiftly giving way to some color. He stepped closer to where George was sitting and leaning down, placed both his hands on the handles of his chair. George was trapped, verbally and physically.

"Why did you defend me?"

Dream was not sure why he dropped his voice like that, he had no reason to pin George with a stare as he was doing right now, and still no clue as to why his heart beat just a little faster as the other boy looked up at him from under his lashes. It was probably just the confrontation. He had almost always managed to have an upper hand at those, but that did not mean those conversations were not stressful for him.

“I did not. I was merely pointing out that they were wrong about you and chipped in some evidence.”

“That’s called defending someone.”

Dream smirked as he watched George visibly struggle before him, the color in his cheeks spreading to his ears and down his pale neck. His gaze fell upon George’s hands, trying to sneak inside his robes undetected and swiftly took his own wand out from his pocket.

“Don’t even try, Davidson. You’re not the only one who can cast spells here.”

George’s hands stilled and upon further ‘insistence’ from Dream, he dropped them in his lap.

“Don’t we have star charts to make?” George spoke.

“We do, but they can go fuck themselves. For now.”

George chuckled and when he looked back up at him, Dream saw how the stars shone faintly in the brown of his eyes.

“What do you want, Dream?” George spoke so softly that Dream had scarcely heard it. For a moment, he forgot why he was doing this in the first place- it seemed to have no purpose and every purpose in the world, all at the same time.

What did he want?

“Why did you defend me?” He repeated. That was all he could think of. While he wanted an answer to this, he knew he wanted more. He knew he had more questions, his subconscious was heavy with them, but they were not clear enough to be verbally phrased. He had not realized when he had leaned even further down, almost eye to eye with George now.

“I-” George cleared his throat. “I don’t know. Felt like... felt like the right thing to do, I guess.”

“I’m really not as big of an arse as you think, Dream.” He said when Dream did not speak. “I’d insult you and criticize you to your face if I want to. Behind someone’s back is not my thing. You might be doing that when it comes to me-”

“You think I do?” Dream asked.

Where was the night taking this conversation? They had never talked for so long before this and he had expected them to fight like they always did, but what they had been doing up until now had just been some casual insults, competition, calling each other out and leaving no chance to embarrass the other. It had never gotten this personal before. He knew he wanted to do nothing with what George thought of him, or anyone for that matter, but it felt strange to be curious about it now.

“I... I don’t know. I have no reason not to.”

That was true. Given the substance of every single interaction the two of them had shared in their entire lifetime, they really had not given each other any reason to believe the other would be civil

to them.

Dream did not know what to say. Should he defend himself? Should he just let it go?

Does it matter?

“I think I’ve done enough work for the night.” He said, retreating from the chair, and turning to walk inside from the little observation space.

“Wait,” George prompted from behind him. He walked to Dream and held up his cloak. “Take this.”

“Keep it. You need it more than I do.”

Saying thus, he left without another word.

George stood there, clutching the cloth in his hands, thoroughly confused. But the cold got the better of him and he slipped it on. It was a few sizes too big on him but by Merlin’s beard did it get him as warm as the hearth in the common room.

Once cozy and comfortable, he sat back down to finish off the work that Dream had left behind.

Chapter End Notes

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perfect timing

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“But you should have told me!”

“I wanted to do it last night, Karl! But you’d already left for your common room!” Nick explained as he tried to keep pace with a furious Karl storming down the corridor.

“If only you loved me more than your wretched pranks!”

“Karl! Babe, get back!”

It was not long before he reached the entrance to the Ravenclaw common room, where he found George walking toward them from the other end.

“Hey-” George began.

“Not now, let’s just move, okay?” Karl said as he took the other boy by the elbow and dragged him along.

George saw how Nick called after them, but his friend never stopped or responded. The Slytherin student had ceased to follow them but when he turned around, he could still see Nick standing there at the top of the long, wide stairs, watching them as they exited the Tower to make their way toward their Potions class. This was exactly why he did not want a relationship.

One moment people were all over each other and the next they behaved like this. He wanted to ask Karl what was wrong but he did not know if he had the energy to listen to him about the relationship drama so early in the morning. Nick had probably just taken a joke too far with Karl yet again.

“Flitwick gives us the Charms results today,”

George almost stopped in his tracks as soon as the words left Karl’s mouth. He had no idea how he had done on that one. Going to that class seemed worse than anything else in the universe at the moment. Why did Dream have to place a bet on Charms? Had he done it for Potions, George would never have given himself such terrible anxiety over it.

The students around them rushed by, their hums and chatters the most careless sounds in the world. George’s insides were twisting, how was everyone so alright?

“Are you okay?” Karl asked.

“I’m fine. I’m just worried about it.”

“You honestly end up getting a perfect score in everything you ‘worry’ about. Loosen up a little bit.”

If only it were that easy. He let out a sigh, listening to the tip taps of numerous shoes upon the stone floor. It would have been oddly comforting under different circumstances.

“Why were you and Nick fighting?” He asked, desperate to shift the spotlight from him.

“He’s an ass.”

“I know. But what did he do?”

“He thought it would be so funny to mix some love potion in someone’s water. And it was supposed to get them hooked after Dream.”

“To prank Dream?” George asked.

“Yes. But he’s Nick. Of course he fucked that up and now... now Nick has an unwelcome admirer.”

George could not help but burst out laughing. Some people turned to give him a few looks, but most just passed by.

Karl sighed, patiently waiting for his friend to calm down, but George showed no signs of stopping.

“If you can stop that, I’d tell you the reason why I got so mad.”

George seemed to sober up a bit at that, still not completely serious but he was trying his best.

“What is it?” He finally asked.

“The one who now likes Nick is... is Eret.”

George was shut up by that. He knew Eret and Karl did not exactly have an easy history. The former used to be Nick’s crush long ago, but had turned him down. Ever since Karl got to know that, he had been awfully insecure whenever Eret was around them.

He believed that Eret was everything he wasn’t and more- stunningly beautiful, confident, radiant, charming... you name it. He never openly expressed it to anyone but George was his best friend for a reason. He had known. He had always known, and Karl only confirmed it later.

“Oh. I... I should not have laughed.”

“That’s fine. You did not know.”

They walked in silence for a bit. George did not really know what to tell him. He had never exactly been romantically jealous or insecure in his life before. Consequently, he had no idea what that was like and it only made things harder for him to talk about.

“I only found out about it when I was waiting for him outside his common room, so we could walk to class together and saw Eret throwing himself at Nick.”

“Did Nick give in?”

“No. He kept trying to get as far away from them as possible. But it was painful to watch nonetheless.”

George told him he was sorry about it but what good was a first-aid band against a deep cut? He could not tell his best friend to let it go, Nick did not reciprocate what Eret offered him and that it was just a love potion after all. When its effects withered away, none of what he saw would hold any significance. He could not tell Karl that it was okay. He knew it was not.

It grew darker as they finally entered the Dungeons, torchlights lighting up their path. It felt almost

nauseating to be huddled so close together with numerous other bodies in these dark, cold passages, but they could not reach their class any other way. George had to put up with it.

Once in, he swiftly began working on the Potion they were supposed to be brewing for the lesson. Almost everyone had a partner to work with, but he preferred working alone and being the Professor's unofficial favorite, he was always granted the leave to be on his own.

But today was not the same as all others.

"I understand that you like working in solitude, Davidson, but just for today I ask you to take on a partner." The professor said, walking over to his table. "I'm expecting an inspection from the Headmistress."

His hands stilled and he set aside the vial filled with a lime-colored potion that he had been holding.

"Sure, sir. Anyone working solo can come over here. I'd prefer not to move my stuff." He said, despite himself.

He continued stirring the boiling mixture in his cauldron, taking care to measure everything perfectly before he added any element to it. The Professor looked around for a suitable partner to pair George up with and had almost given up when he could not find even one person working on their own, and then, all of a sudden, a familiar,

"Am I too late, Professor?" Fell into George's ears.

A slow smile spread on the old man's face and his shoulders slumped in relief.

"Perfect timing, Clay! Come over here, lad."

Chapter End Notes

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on my works at @ IcedTales!
also, comments letting me know how you liked this one are highly appreciated and
welcome! thanks a ton for all the support <3

bother

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Make sure you do not add too many Eucalyptus leaves or you’d blow up the entire dungeon.”

The Professor’s warnings were always exaggerated. Today they seemed almost silly. Maybe it was the fact that he had been paired up with the one person who he was trying to avoid. Maybe they really had been silly.

His peace had been tainted, it felt like a violation of his sanctuary- his workspace. George, where he had always worked unbothered, almost becoming one with the very air, was now conscious of every little detail- like exactly how he stood, if there was enough space between him and his ‘partner’, all the trivial things he had never had to care about.

“Maybe it’s time you added the third vial.” Dream suggested.

Why did he have to speak? Could he not just pretend that George was not there at all?

“Maybe you should consider not telling me what to do.”

“Maybe you should stop thinking you’re better than everyone else.” Dream spat.

George looked up, only to see the other boy already opening up the said vial, struggling with the corkscrew a bit.

“Last time I checked, I scored a good deal more than you in Potions. Keep. That. Vial. Down.” George spoke through gritted teeth.

Dream only smirked, much to his increasing annoyance. He kept the vial down anyway but from the looks of it, he was not done with George yet.

“It was only two points.” He remarked.

“Which made me the top scorer of the year while you stood cold at second.”

The smirk was gone but he was not sure if that was a good sign. There was something of a gentle fury that replaced it; it was only there for a flash, but it existed. George saw it. He took a step back as Dream advanced towards him.

“Talking of being cold, were you warm enough last night?” Dream spoke, his words mocking, ringing deep and low inside George’s body.

He was enjoying this, George knew it. He tried to match the taller boy’s gaze but the green was too bright, too much. He looked down at the slight chips in the stone floor, hoping to wriggle his way out of this conversation.

“We... we need to get back to that Potion.”

“Do we?”

George could feel the chill of the dungeon creeping up his legs as he felt his personal space shrinking by the second. Dream seemed to have no regard for the fact that they were stood in the

middle of a classroom full to the brim. The Professor had their back to them, but that did not mean he could not turn around.

“We do. It’s not supposed to boil for more than three minutes.”

“There’s still a minute and few seconds to go, George.”

“Well, we wouldn’t want the Professor to turn around and find us like this.”

“Like what?” Dream asked, playing at being naive, taking another impossible step closer to him.

His smile had grown, while George found it hard to move a single muscle. He could see the dusting of light freckles atop Dream’s nose and cheekbones- they were so close, he could touch them.

Heat pooled, shameful and sudden, in his guts as he brushed the thought away. He now knew why he faintly smelled so nice when he had removed Dream’s cloak to finally go off to sleep. He had almost not noticed the fragrance until he had put his arm across his face as he lay in bed last night.

The fragrance was all around him now, the source evident, and he struggled to not inhale deeply. He wanted more of it. He could not imagine himself getting it though.

“Why do you bother me so much?” George asked.

“Why do you say things that make me want to bother you?”

What was that even supposed to mean? He struggled to say anything back, he was too warm, they were too close, Dream smelled too good. George wanted to shake his head, push the other boy away and get back to his potion, but he also wanted to not move, to see how far the other one would go, how far he could find himself going. Was it possible to feel all of that at once?

“Um, George?”

They jolted apart, as they heard Noah call from the table beside them. Dream went back to the potion, putting the cauldron off the little fire. He looked so unfazed, so indifferent, as though he had not just been centimeters apart. Had George imagined all of it? Surely he hadn’t.

Noah, on the other hand, looked irritated- almost cross. Was chatting a little while one made potions so rude?

“Noah, hi.”

“I was wondering if you could help me out with this. The potion looks funny.” He said pointing at his own cauldron, but George did not miss how his eyes kept flicking back to Dream.

One look at the vessel and George could tell that it was messed up beyond repair. What was supposed to look purple had now turned a nasty brown and smelled even worse when George went over to Noah’s table and took a closer look. His partner had entirely given up on their assignment and sat nursing her burns from stupidly trying to lift the heated cauldron.

“You need to throw this away.” George remarked, but got no response.

He looked up to see his eyes trained on Dream instead- intent, unblinking, angry.

“Are you listening, Noah?”

“Huh? Yes, yes, yes, I am.”

Noah turned back to look at him. The loss of focus in his eyes was honestly amusing. He did not give two flying fucks about the potion and it could not have been clearer.

“Throw it away then. Start over.”

George walked back to his table, hoping Noah would not prove the Professor’s exaggerations to be correct with his questionable potion brewing skills. He peered into their own potion and his eyebrows immediately knit into a worried frown.

“What the fuck did you do?”

“Calm your tits, I just used a shortcut. I saved us four steps.” Dream said.

“No one asked you to save on all that time. We could have followed the procedure and reached there the correct way.”

“Just say it, Davidson. You’re looking for excuses to spend more time with me.”

A sigh escaped George. Why did Dream have to make everything about himself? He watched as his partner opened the lid of a can, the contents of which they had to add next. He could not help but notice how his long fingers strained, almost turning scarlet from the effort. The veins on the back of his hand seemed to barely contain themselves as they became more pronounced than ever. He shifted his gaze back to the instructions in his book before he could be caught.

He was just envious he didn’t have any of that. It was nothing more.

Nothing more, he reminded himself.

Chapter End Notes

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shield

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Are you mad at me?” Karl asked as they walked down the corridors, back to their common rooms. There was nothing like being done for the day.

“No, it’s just that... I did not exactly have the best day.” George said. “I’m sorry if I sulk.”

“Yeah, it’s fine Gogy. Me neither.”

They set their stuff down in the chairs they usually took, by the window, not too far away from the hearth. There was silence for a bit, before Karl opened up his arms and George walked right into his embrace.

“Did Nick apologize?”

“What does it matter? He will do it all again.” Karl spoke, sounding more defeated than George had heard him in a while.

They parted, sitting in their respective places- George looking out the window and up at the darkening sky while Karl bid his usual greetings to people around who waved at him or asked him what was up.

“What went wrong with you?” His best friend asked.

George let out a sigh. With a tiring wave of realization, he registered the fact that he had not yet talked to Karl about everything that had been going down between him and Dream- the astronomy job, that day in the Great hall, the bet... there was just so much that he had to lay in front of Karl.

“I lost a bet. To Dream.”

“Oh no... what was the stake?”

“It could be everything at this point. He asked me for a blanket wish which he could redeem whenever he wanted.”

George ran a hand through his hair as he felt Karl’s concerned gaze upon him. When they had got their Charms results back today, he had missed Dream’s score by merely three points. He could not shake off the triumphant laughter he had heard from the back of the classroom as soon as Dream had seen his score. Or the, “Prepare to please me, Davidson!” that had been thrown his way, the teasing, ape-like noises from the other boys that had followed.

“I’m so sorry, dude. I don’t know what to say.”

George let out a sigh. It was not Karl’s fault, or anybody else’s. If anyone was responsible for it, it was him. He had slipped up and made mistakes. He had stupidly agreed on such a bet, despite knowing what Dream could be like. He honestly needed to stop making such questionable life decisions if he wanted peace.

“I hate him. How can a single person be so cocky, selfish, cruel and downright stupid?” He said. “I know that he’s much better than I am at Charms but I did work so hard this one time... only to

lose?”

“We can’t get what we want all the time now, can we?” Karl said, taking George’s hands in his.

He was surprisingly warm and the frozen skin of his own fingers seemed to succumb. He let Karl hold him.

“I never get what I want.”

His best friend clicked his tongue and mockingly slapped his hand.

“Come on, you know that’s not true. Besides, you’re smarter than him.” Karl said. “ You’ve proven as much countless times. Don’t put this one score in all the spotlight.”

He would not have put that one score in the spotlight, but what if it demanded to be seen that way? What if it was more important than any of them made it out to be? What if Dream scarred him like no one ever had?

“Are you scared?” Karl asked when he did not speak for a while.

He knew his best friend did not mean to mock. He knew that it was just a genuine, concerned question.

Was he scared?

“I just don’t trust him, that’s all.”

For a while, none of them spoke. The only sounds were the buzzing of chatter in the common room. It was funny how everyone else seems like the epitome of normalcy and peace when those are the very things that seem the farthest from your reach. A distant star you can only watch, never touch.

“You know you’ll have me no matter what happens, right?” Karl spoke.

George squeezed his hand as he struggled not to let his eyes get moist.

“I do.”

*

George was jumpier than usual for the next few days. He tried to keep more to the shadows, as far away from the spotlight as he could get, and especially not anywhere near Dream’s field of vision. He even skipped a day of Divination duty and when Professor Phil asked him about it, he practically begged the man to shift his duties to sometime in the early evening rather than the night for some days.

The Professor had agreed but he knew that it was a temporary escape. He would have to go back to the night duties at some point. He would have to go back to working with Dream.

He had also noticed that whenever he was with Noah and Dream was around, the taller boy would simply fix them with a strange look and move away. Since the day he had discovered that, he had almost been using Noah as a protection shield. He felt bad though, knowing how genuinely happy Noah got whenever George would come spend time with him on his own. Little did he know that the true motive was something else entirely.

Once when they were in the library, Dream did not move away. He kept his green stare zeroed in

on them and George felt like he could not breathe anymore. He was almost certain that he would make his way to where George and Noah were sitting. His pulse quickened and with a faint sense of dread he realized, that a little part of him maybe even wanted Dream to come there.

A piece of him wanted to see if Dream had even noticed that George wasn't around as much anymore, if that mattered to him, if he cared.

For the first time in a long while, his gaze locked with Dream's, curiosity overruling fear, as Noah softly read him verses from magical literature.

Dream's stare was sharp, his mouth in a straight line. George did not know what to make of it. He wasn't going to look away though, not today. His eyes searched the planes and angles of the face he recognized so well now. He would probably recognize Dream anywhere.

"Are you listening?" Noah asked from beside him.

With a start, he tore his eyes away from the Head Boy.

"Yeah... yeah. I am." George lied. "You read beautifully."

He watched as Noah's cheeks blushed warmer. When he looked back up to where Dream was, George saw him swiftly turn away.

His heart sank lower than he had expected it to. In no way it should have been this disappointing to him. He even felt himself teetering on the edge of pain.

"He doesn't care." George breathed out.

He should be happy about that, shouldn't he?

"Excuse me?" Noah asked, looking up from his book.

George mentally smacked himself for actually saying that out loud.

"I said the hero seems fair."

*

As he lay in bed that night while everyone around him had dozed off, he could not help but think about the hardness of Dream's jaw, the fire in his eyes as he saw it in the library that day. Was he just angry that George had been abandoning him in Divination, leaving the harder work to be done in the dead of the night for him?

But more importantly he began to question his own reasons for avoiding Dream. Was he really that afraid of what Dream might ask of him? He hadn't cared about any of that before. Why now?

Or was it something else entirely?

"Shut up. Shut up!" George whisper yelled into the night as he shut his eyes tightly.

He did not want to admit it.

He never wanted to admit that it was easier avoiding Dream than watching him laugh and twisting his wand between his long, sleek fingers. It was easier not looking at his face than feeling the green of his eyes consume him when he did.

It was easier to stay away than to let himself be pulled into Dream under the stars, even when they were doing what they both hated most- Divination.

The worst part was that Dream didn't even have to try. He was just so unapologetically 'him'. Something George could never be.

The last thing he remembered before letting himself slip into sleep was pulling a long, black cloak from his drawers that was a few sizes too big for him and replacing his pillow with it.

It still smelled of him.

George wondered how he would ever give it back.

Chapter End Notes

i know i said on twitter that i wouldn't be able to update before 20th but can you blame me for aggressively wishing to write more about DNF after the trick Dream pulled yesterday? XD

thanks for reading by the way! i love you all so much and I appreciate all the time you give to me and to this work.

my twitter is @ IcedTales if you want to follow for updates regarding my works! let me know how you liked this chapter in the comments!

work

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George watched as Karl struggled to fend off attacks from his partner. He had always been a bit too panicky when it came to duels.

Defense Against The Dark Arts did neither of them any good. They just didn't have the agility and speed it required, but it was a compulsory class. Maybe he was just a tad bit better than Karl was. He sat in a corner of the arena, waiting for his turn, *dreading* it.

He saw Karl's wand fly out of his hand as he landed squarely onto the hard stone floor. Nick rushed to the fallen boy, fixing his opponent with a deathly glare.

"I think Mr. Jacobs can walk back to his place. You don't need to-" The Professor began but Nick did not care to listen to him as he helped his boyfriend up.

"Are you okay?" He whispered into Karl's ear.

"I'm fine." Karl spoke, beginning to untangle himself from Nick's hold.

The other boy only held on to him tighter, maneuvering him toward the sides, where they were all seated.

"Please. I'm sorry, Karl." Nick apologized. "It's so hard to be happy without you."

"I'm going to go sit with George."

"Am I forgiven?" Nick asked.

For a moment, Karl could only look at Nick as he visibly struggled to keep himself from breaking down right there. Leaning in, he dropped a soft peck on Nick's lips.

"Don't give love potions to anyone ever again."

"I promise. Never." Nick said and before letting his boyfriend go, he kissed Karl a last time.

*

George had to sit through a few more duels until he was finally called. He struggled to keep his legs from shaking as he walked up to the center. All around there were either expecting, curious eyes, or ones that thought him to be unskilled.

He waited for the Professor to be done writing grades from the previous duel down into his sheets and when that was done, the tall man turned toward him.

"Pick a house except your own." The professor said. "You'll be fighting someone from that one."

Hufflepuff, he wanted to say. But he knew that most of them were already done dueling. Also, they were known to generally be more forgiving in friendly spars like these and he didn't have a mind to visit the hospital wing like a few others today. His request wouldn't be granted.

"If you've got balls Davidson, say Slytherin." Dream's voice resounded through the lightly buzzing classroom, making the others burst out into collective laughter.

George clenched his jaw tighter, trying to shut out the sounds of mockery. He scanned the Slytherin area trying to figure out the people who had not come to the arena yet. Were his chances good?

The last thing he wanted was more public embarrassment but from what he saw, it seemed sort of unavoidable. He was a *little* better than average at dueling, and whoever his eyes seemed to land on now, looked to him so much more able and strong than he was.

Dream, as always, had made everything so much worse. He could not choose any other group. This had to be it.

He wondered why Dream did what he did. They had been successfully avoiding each other and after that day in the library he hardly thought Dream would acknowledge him anymore. A dull ache trickled down his chest into his stomach- *is that all I am? Someone to be made fun of?*

Before he knew it, the one word that he wished wouldn't escape his lips, did.

"Slytherin." He spoke.

He sounded infinitely more confident than he felt, angry even. He watched one of the eyebrows on his Professor's countenance lift up as he peered at George from above his low-set spectacles.

Soot, get in the arena, was all he heard as he desperately tried to block out the cheers from Slytherins and groans from the Ravenclaws.

Wilbur. Strong, so eloquent that his wand practically waited for him to talk to it, and almost double the size of George.

How was he ever going to not make it to Madam Pomfrey in the hospital?

Sighing, he took his stance and thought of all the great aurors he had ever read about. The heroes, their bravery and tact and speed. He tried to imagine he had it all. He hoped it would work.

Chapter End Notes

hello! thanks for reading and giving this work so much of your time. I'm so glad to have you here!

if you like what I write, make sure to follow me on twitter @ IcedTales for updates regarding this and other works.

let me know how you liked this chapter in the comments! thanks again!

Icarus

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He watched as Wilbur slid his wand out of his robes, positioning it right at him. He visibly gulped as he tried to calculate the odds in favor of a win for him. They were in the negatives.

His eyes wandered back to Dream almost instinctively.

Are you happy now?

The ever-present fire in his green orbs seemed to burn steady, the lines of his face smooth, his jaw set. There was no emotion, nothing George could read.

All of a sudden, he heard Wilbur's deep rumble.

"Incarcerous!"

Long ropes shot out from the end of his wand, reaching toward George. His brain almost froze, trying to think of a counter. Time slowed and stretched and even though it was a split-second, it felt like ages.

"Incendio!" He yelled, right as a thick rope was about to close in on his ankle.

Scorching flames escaped the tip of George's wand, licking up and engulfing the ropes. It was a gigantic show of yellow and orange and red. He stumbled backward, the heat being too much. Within a breath, there was just ash.

The cheers from the Ravenclaws made his heart soar. He was breathing hard as he squared his shoulders, almost feeling braver.

Wilbur didn't seem too happy about his ropes getting charred to death like that. His dark gaze, although intimidating, did not faze George much now.

Wilbur muttered the next spell under his breath and George could not catch it. He did not have the time to cast a blocking charm and the next thing he knew, he was suspended upside down in the air at Wilbur's mercy. He felt his robes cloud around his face, falling in front of his eyes. He could see nothing but black.

Laughter, from every direction, boomed in his ears. That which he had feared, had happened. He had been successfully reduced to a joke again.

He felt his face heat up as blood rushed to his head. He had to get back up soon or there would be a bigger problem for him to solve. He tightened his fingers around his wand once more and parting his hanging robes from his other hand as best as he could, he yelled, *"Expelliarmus!"*

Green sparks flew out of his hand and he waited for it- for Wilbur's wand to fall, and him to land on the ground with it, but that never happened. He watched as the light beam completely missed its target and laughter erupted once again.

Of course, what good was anyone hanging upside down?

In frustration, he kicked at the air, obviously to no good and shot more blind spells around. Nothing worked and all it did was tire him out. He began taking in strained breaths after a while and his head, full of blood, felt like it would explode.

“George, you’ve got this!”

He could hear Karl cheering him on in the distance, but he knew he hadn’t got this. He knew he was losing and he was being laughed at.

He felt Wilbur maneuvering him around with his wand, making him float upward, then bringing him down. His insides danced and twisted and he felt like he was going to be sick. Or pass out. Or both.

“For Merlin’s sake!” He heard a familiar voice yell. “*Expelliarmus!*”

Before George knew it, he was falling to the ground. He expected a sharp, harsh landing, for his knees and elbows to be scraped with the impact, but instead, he found skin and linen and wool.

Once again, he was surrounded by the scent that lulled him to sleep every night.

Dream.

George was in his arms.

He had been caught.

“Ten points from Slytherin! Why did you interrupt the duel, Clay?” The Professor asked.

“Because you didn’t.”

“You know that it did not require intervention.” The Professor spoke. “George had almost figured it out.”

When Dream did not say anything, the Professor spoke again.

“If he keeps being saved, how will he ever learn? He’s good enough to do away with the majority of his opponents.” The man said. “I made him fight Wilbur for a reason.”

George looked to where Wilbur was standing, clutching his hand, his wand discarded on the floor. Had Dream’s spell been so powerful that it *injured* Wilbur?

“I’m sorry, Professor.” Dream almost whispered.

With surprising care, he set George down on the cold floor, slipping his arms out from under the smaller boy’s knees and back. George felt it instantly, the lack of warmth and of the fragrance that had become a guilty pleasure of sorts.

He watched as the class got dismissed, as Dream turned around, his stiff, broad shoulders set in a tense line. His usual gang of followers pooled around him, like moths drawn to a flame.

How had he so much power? What gave him such gravity?

George stood up, brushing the dust off of his cloak, his eyes still trained to the back of Dream’s head. Before he could look away, the taller boy turned around, and there it was again- the green fire, the unfathomable depth of them, and the hard, sharp angles of Dream’s face.

George averted his eyes so fast as if he were scorched. Maybe he was.

He reminded himself of Icarus, of what happens to those who dare to go too close to the sun.

“I will not be that stupid.” He spoke as he stared at the little cracks in the floor.

It is not too hard, he reminded himself.

Right?

Chapter End Notes

thankyou for giving your time to this work! let me know how you liked the chapter in the comments.

if you like what I write, please consider following my Twitter @ IcedTales if you haven't already!

please be safe and take care :)

pretend

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The lump in George's throat seemed to have settled permanently. He sat across from Professor Phil, noting down the things the man spoke. For the first time in days, he was here at the ideal time. He was here at night, as he should be.

He had been jittery when he had stepped in, not sure if he would be able to talk to Dream after the events of the day. He had stealthily looked around- by the book shelves, at the chairs and tables in the back of the room, the balcony- but he found no familiar blond head, no lean, strong arms, no flowing cloak. He had quietly assumed his place then, and began working on compiling texts about constellations and distant stars.

"Is Clay not going to be here?" He dared to ask.

When the man did not respond right away, he thought Professor Phil had not heard him. Embarrassment spread hot in his chest and up his neck. He would not ask again.

"I hope he does." The Professor spoke, looking up from his parchment. "I plan to go away for a little bit while you complete some charts for me. That would be too much work for you alone."

"Can I stay the night in the Tower?" George asked.

He knew going back meant following the routine he had subconsciously adopted- stripping off his clothes, slipping into his four-poster bed, drawing the curtains around him, and stealthily, as if committing a crime not yet labeled as one, retrieving the cursed Slytherin cloak from his drawers and replacing his pillow for it.

He did not want to do that. Not today.

An eyebrow lifted on Phil's countenance, his fingers abandoned the quill.

Did I ask for too much?

"Is everything okay back at the dorm? Does someone bully you?" The man asked.

George's eyes widened and he swiftly shook his head no. He had not even thought that the Professor would jump to that conclusion.

"I'm safe, Professor. I just feel like I could use a change."

Phil regarded him for a moment, making sure George wasn't lying.

"Alright, there's a bed in the little room behind the bookshelves." He said. "But I must warn you that it gets terribly cold in here."

George told him that it was fine and that he did not mind the cold all that much. He knew that it was not true, that he felt the cold sink deeper into his flesh than most people, but Phil did not need to know that.

After a while, Phil went away, leaving George alone to the charts he did not care about, his thoughts he could not find an escape from and the dark he feared so much. He lit some extra

candles to make it a little bit brighter, watching the wax drip down their slender white bodies as they flickered, no match for the moonlight.

George almost dropped his wand when he heard a series of hard knocks from the double doors.

“Professor?”

Every inch of George stood on edge as soon as he heard Dream.

That’s it. He was finally here and George did not know if he was okay.

“He’s not here.” He called back. “But... but get in.”

If Dream had said anything, George could not hear it over the sudden strong wind that blew in from the window, extinguishing all the candles he had just lit. It was too dark to make him feel comfortable, but not so dark that he could not see anything. The silver glimmer from the moon was bright enough.

“Fuck.” George whispered as he desperately tried to light the candles back but the wind wouldn’t stop and the windows were not to be closed. Professor Phil just did not allow it.

“Are you that scared of the dark?” He heard Dream from behind him.

He did not dare turn around. He reminded himself that fire burnt, it scorched and it hurt and it *killed*.

Dream had fire in him. It blazed green, hot, merciless, beautiful.

He *was* fire.

“I just don’t like it.” George answered.

“Like the infant that you are.”

George squeezed his eyes shut at that. He was not sure what he would say if he were to respond. All he knew was that he would regret it. He would regret every single thing if he wasn’t careful.

“The charts are on the table. There’s some notes I made beside them.” George spoke. “Complete it all based on the notes.”

“What do you mean *complete it all*? Are you not going to contribute?”

George sighed.

“I did my part, do yours!” He said, louder than he had intended.

He trembled slightly from the impact of it. His fingers shook so slightly, it almost seemed like they were vibrating.

“You don’t need to yell at me or give me all the charts.” Dream said. “I get it I was late-”

“If you’re so much better at everything than I am,” George interrupted. “Why don’t you do all of this on your own?”

“Damn right I am. But you can’t just give me all your work.”

George rolled his eyes. He did not have it in him to carry this forward anymore. He turned around, still not looking at Dream, and took his seat. As soon as the wind stilled, he lit the candles again.

He dived into the work like there was nothing and no one else that mattered. All that existed were these charts and the little numbers on them and bright silver ink.

George almost withdrew his hand when he felt Dream's fingers brush its back in an attempt to reach for the notes resting on George's side of the long table. He pretended that it did not heat up his skin instantaneously, that it did not leave a buzzing trail of confusion in its wake.

He pretended that it did not matter.

He had to force himself to not glance sideways and avoid the hair that looked as though the sun had made itself home in them, the expanse of imperfectly perfect skin.

After a while, he couldn't. He let go and allowed himself a single peek. He told himself that he was only checking if Dream was doing what he was supposed to be doing.

Soon, George realized, that it had been a mistake. He should never have given in and looked because to look away required greater effort than to not look at all. Like always.

He watched Dream's long, nimble fingers expertly work with ink and parchment. His eyes moved over the words written in George's semi-neat hand as he made them come alive on the chart.

"Do you want something or you're just incredibly attracted to me?" Dream spoke.

The nonchalance in his voice was almost offensive to George. His skin was quick to pick up heat and turn every shade of pink imaginable.

"I want to ask you something you once asked me." George said.

Dream abandoned his quill and carded his fingers through his hair before turning around to face George.

What?

"Why... why did you defend me?" George asked. "Why did you help me out in the arena?"

Dream paused, before the hint of a smile ghosted over his lips.

"I'll just say what you said. It felt right."

George almost slammed his hand on the wooden table in frustration. Instead, all he did was ball his hand into a tight fist, his nails digging into his skin painfully.

"You literally risked detention when you did that. As the fucking *Head Boy*." He spoke. "Why do you care?"

George's question hung between them. It lingered, it had nowhere to go. George wasn't taking it back and Dream's lower lip trembled slightly trying to answer it.

"Pass... pass me your charts. I need a reference." Dream spoke.

"You're not avoiding this. Not today."

"You can and I can't?"

It was George's turn to be dumbfounded. He rummaged through his head, in hopes of finding the right thing to say.

"I didn't technically escape it. You were the one who walked away."

"I guess I can walk away again, then." Dream said as he pushed his chair back to get up.

Before George could think it through, he closed both his hands around Dream's arm. His dark gaze was unforgiving. Dream wasn't going anywhere till he said something.

Dream sighed.

The very fingers that held the quill a few moments ago, were now pressed to George's chin, holding him in place. He felt Dream's face edge closer to his, until all he could breathe was Dream, all his skin knew was the warmth Dream caused to flood through his veins.

"You're a stubborn little thing, aren't you?"

The sudden rasp in Dream's voice, the way it dipped so low, how the candlelight caught his hair but the moon lit his face, it was too much. George's heart hammered inside his chest, screaming at him to either go in or back out.

George gulped, his voice having abandoned him right when he needed it. All he could do was let himself become one with the fire he had promised not to wander too close to.

Dream's lips parted and for a moment, George anticipated things to take an entirely different turn. Would he stop Dream if he were to lean in?

"I'm the one who's supposed to be a jerk to you." He whispered. "No one else."

Chapter End Notes

thanks for reading this chapter! please let me know how you like it in the comments
<3

if you haven't followed my twitter still, what are you doing? it's @ IcedTales <3

captain

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George tried to remember how to breathe. Everything felt muted- the chill in the air, the candles around, time. None of it held force, none of it mattered.

How could Dream just go around saying stuff like that?

The warm fingers had long abandoned his skin, he could no longer take a breath in and smell Dream. The taller boy had moved away and buried his head back in the charts as if he hadn't just attempted to pull George's heart out.

George's ears were still too warm. Did he ever want to know what he had just been told?

He didn't get any of it. Dream wanted to see him suffer so why did it matter who did it to him?

He put a hand up to his chin, to where Dream's hand had been, and it felt funny. It didn't feel like a part of him anymore. It was different, transformed.

"Are you... are you playing in the match on Saturday?" George asked. If Dream wanted to pretend he didn't just do anything out of line, it was fine. Two could play that game and be indifferent.

"I'm the captain, you idiot." Dream replied. "Of course I'm playing."

George felt dumb. He had known that Dream was the Captain and Chaser of the Slytherin Quidditch team. Why did essential knowledge escape him just when he needed it? He tried tallying the chart he had made with his notes but it was all in vain. He couldn't concentrate. Nothing made sense.

"I thought you didn't like Quidditch." Dream spoke after a while.

"I don't."

"Why are you coming to the match then? Your house isn't even playing."

George was taken aback. He wasn't sure if he had told anyone about him going to the match, probably not even Karl.

"How do you know that?"

"Noah doesn't shut up about you at practice." Dream said. "George *this*, George *that*. It's fucking annoying."

George never would have thought that Noah talked about *him*, of all things, at practice. He was going to have a word with the boy about it. If he was going to be disclosing things they talk about like this, especially to Dream, it would be a problem.

"I... I only agreed to it because Karl would be there too. With Nick, you know?"

Dream only looked at him for a moment, unblinking. *Fire burns*, George repeated to himself. He almost felt like he would cower under the heated, green gaze, but he held himself together. He tried his best.

“Don’t ever lie to me again.” Dream spoke, his voice on the edge of being dangerous.

George felt the hair on his arms raise to attention. He tried to gulp down the lump in his throat, but it still seemed as heavy and demanding. He watched as Dream got up and without looking at him again, made to go out the door.

“Dream, wai-”

But he never stopped. He was gone.

George felt his heart drop as he finally became aware of the growing loneliness in the room. He put his face in his hands, his elbows resting on the wooden table.

Don’t cry, don’t cry, don’t cry. He chanted in his head constantly, but when had tears ever listened to the miserable?

He felt moisture seep into the lines of his palms where they met his eyes.

“Why do I always end up making everyone mad?” He asked out into the night, his voice soft as dew-laden petals.

He jerked up when he felt a warm hand softly close over his shoulder. Looking up, George was met with familiar, soft blue eyes.

Professor Phil. He had never heard him come in.

“He’ll forgive you.” The man said. “He’s Clay.”

*

George eventually went to his own dorm, the Astronomy Tower being so cold he feared he might get hypothermia. He tiptoed into the room where the other boys slept and glanced over at Karl, his bed right beside George’s own.

His best friend was curled in on himself like a fetus. George couldn’t help but smile when the mouse-haired boy giggled, even in his sleep. Always the happy sunshine he was.

As he lay in his own bed with the cloak nestled around his neck, he couldn’t help but think about how messed up all of it was.

Why was he even upset that Dream wasn’t happy with him?

He knew that he didn’t like making others mad in general, but he had never expected that it would extend to Dream as well. Things had always been different when he was involved. They had been more raw, brutal even. George could pull out anything from his sleeve and nothing ever shifted what they had going on.

The ceiling he had been staring at seemed to almost stare back at him, in mockery. He decided to not lose anymore sleep over someone who could be dealt with later. He turned to his side, his nose pressing into the soft black cloth.

Dream wasn’t the end of the world.

It was going to be fine, he hoped.

*

Chapter End Notes

hello everyone! i hope you're doing well. so i have a quick little announcement to make:

from now on, I shall be updating every Tuesday and Saturday, beginning from next week. if I'm feeling particularly excited about a chapter I write (which will be rare), then I might give you an extra update that week <3

thanks for reading and do let me know how you liked it in the comments!

my twitter is @ IcedTales so come say hi!

third wheel

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George picked the peas out of his soup, carefully setting them aside in a little bowl. The Ravenclaw and Hufflepuff tables were barren today, save for a few students. Nobody wanted to be up that early on a Saturday morning. The Slytherin and Gryffindor tables on the other hand were thriving, the only words in everyone's mouth being ones about the match.

Quidditch- what a hype.

Karl slipped into the seat right beside his, having hopped over from the Slytherin table.

"Please tell me you're sitting with us."

"And third wheel?" George spoke. "No, thank you."

Karl smacked a playful hand on his shoulder, making him spill some of the soup out of his spoon.

"Nick isn't even going to the match."

Oh.

"Why is that?"

"He has detention with the Arithmency professor." Karl said. "That idiot is always running into trouble."

They ate in silence for a while. The cold metal of George's spoon clanked against the porcelain bowl, the almost too salty soup being a welcome distraction from the embarrassment that coursed through his veins and dissolved in his bloodstream.

Dream would have known right away when George had said that he was going because *Nick and Karl were going too*. He also didn't understand why he felt the need to hide that it was for Noah's sake. He told himself that it was for privacy reasons, but he knew that it was something more than that.

"You shouldn't be one to talk about third wheeling," Karl said. "When you literally made the entire class third wheel for Dream and yourself."

There it was again. Ever since that Defense Against The Dark Arts class, Karl had been after George's life. He couldn't find it in himself to shut up about how Dream couldn't see him like that, about how they seemed to end up together everywhere and when they didn't, Dream *intervened*.

Karl even went as far saying that Noah was not why he was here, that George was rooting for Dream.

George was thankful he had not told Karl anything about the astronomy tower and what went down there, or he would never hear the end of this teasing.

"He's looking at you," Karl spoke, munching into his toast.

"Will you stop?"

His best friend only shook his head frantically, before glancing over to the Slytherin table once more. George couldn't help but follow Karl's gaze this time and there it was, the fire, the flares it brought and the accompanying confusion in all its green glory. He felt his skin heat up almost instantaneously.

Dream was the first to look away, and George thought he saw a hint of crimson paint his cheekbones. It lasted a second but a second could be so long, George had not known. It left his chest tight till after a little while later, gripping at his insides as if keeping them from falling apart.

He did not dare to look up and glance at the Slytherins after that. He heard Karl's occasional giggles, his constant requests for George to look up and acknowledge Dream again, his reports of when and when he wasn't being stared at.

"He's mad at me, Karl." George said finally. "He probably wants to humiliate me again. He's just looking for a chance."

Karl's eyebrows knit into a frown and he dropped the last bits of his toast into his plate.

"Is everything okay?"

"Yeah, I just kind of had to lie to him." George said. "He figured it out."

He saw his best friend flinch and go back to munching his toast.

"Nick told me that he's ruthless when he feels deceived," Karl spoke with a mouthful. "I'm surprised you don't have a broken nose or something."

A chill ran down George's spine at the thought of ever having to physically confront Dream, with or without a wand. He knew he wouldn't stand a chance.

"He absolutely must have a thing for you to let you go like that," Karl gave him a nudge with his elbow.

"Another word about him and I'll pour juice down your shirt,"

*

They struggled to find seats for themselves in the overcrowded spectator area. Even though they tried their best to make it early, but what chance did two Ravenclaws stand against a swarm of Slytherins and Gryffindors?

"George, here!"

Noah stood by one of the better seats, broomstick in hand, waving frantically. George took Karl's hand and pulled him along, struggling to get to where the other boy was.

Upon getting closer, he found that Noah had been kind enough to save him and Karl seats. George beamed at him and expressed his thanks before wishing him luck for the match.

"I'm rooting for your team," George spoke over the loud buzzing of students all around.

"Thank you," Noah said with a shy smile and gleaming eyes. It was so easy to see how whipped he really was for George, who felt horrible for literally using Noah to escape Dream at one point.

"I was wondering if you'd like to come to the after-party with me?" He asked. "Or we could just skip straight to... you know." He hesitated. "Whatever you'd like, honestly."

Oh.

George had almost forgotten that he had agreed for a temporary renewal of the *arrangement* him and Noah had figured out for themselves. He desperately tried to remind himself of why he had gotten himself into this, but nothing seemed good enough now. He still found Noah attractive, it was true, but for some reason, he couldn't bring himself to shake an unexplainable feeling of *guilt*, whenever he thought about progressing forward with what Noah and him had built for themselves.

He didn't want to outrightly reject Noah and ruin the game for him, which was why he nodded and told the boy that he was down for going to the after-party. He could always tell Noah that he had changed his mind there. He could back out then and make things suck less for this boy. That was the least he could do.

When George finally retired to his seat beside Karl, he was met with a questioning blue-gray glare.

"When were you going to tell me that you and Noah were back together?" He asked.

"We were never *together*," George said. "It was just a friends-with-benefits kind of thing last year. We are planning to renew it."

Karl scoffed. "You don't mean that, do you?"

"What?"

"You don't want it anymore, not with Noah."

Damn Karl and the super powers he had unlocked being friends with George for so long. This man could read him like a book at this point.

"You don't know that..." George began but stopped when he saw Karl's raised eyebrows. He wasn't buying anything George had to say.

"Fine." He huffed out. "You're right. I think I will tell Noah to just forfeit this entire thing in the after-party."

The looming goal posts on each side of the oval field and the light mist covering the entire area like a cold, moist blanket was all George focused on. He did not want to think about what would happen after. That could be dealt with when the time came around.

Karl's familiar giggles rang in his ears. He turned to look at his best friend, his head thrown back in sheer amusement. George wondered how long they had till the match began.

"Little George is breaking hearts, your honor," Karl spoke. "He's a heart-breaker."

Oh God.

Chapter End Notes

thanks for reading! please let me know how you liked it in the comments.

here is my twitter: @ IcedTales if you want to follow <3

i will keep up with my schedule of updating biweekly, that is, Saturday and Tuesday!

snitch

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Hello lads!” The announcer, a skinny boy with thick curls of gold, practically screamed into the microphone.

“And ladies, and everyone in between and beyond. Tommy, try to be more inclusive please.” The co-commentator, a guy with cropped dark hair that George faintly recognized as someone called Jack Manifold from the year below his, chided his partner.

“I can’t believe they let fifth and sixth years comment and score for the match.” Someone from behind him spoke.

“They’re scoring too?” Karl asked, turning around.

“Yeah, look over there.”

The person pointed to the opposite end of the field where two boys, one of them impressively tall and masked with sunglasses on, and the other just as short, giggly and active, stood with the scoreboard. The taller one wrote down the names of the teams and drew the respective columns while the shorter one seemed to be directing him, almost *threatening*, with the way the taller boy seemed to put his hand to his heart sometimes or join his hands in forgiveness.

It was so comical yet adorable, George smiled.

“That’s Tubbo and Ranboo!” Karl exclaimed. “They help Wilbur with photographs for the student newspaper.”

For the thousandth time, George marveled at how his best friend seemed to know practically everyone. Even juniors. Who kept track of them?

“Give it up for Gryffindor!” Tommy’s voice boomed throughout the grounds as the seven Gryffindor players in their reds and golds zoomed out of their pavilions.

George clapped along with the rest in welcome and encouragement as the Gryffindor area erupted in thunderous cheers. Their captain, Floris, soared higher on the broomstick than the rest and waved to the crowds who waved back. George saw appreciation and the adrenaline high on his slim, sharp face. He was made for this.

As the Gryffindor players in their house colors took up their positions on the field, Tommy announced the arrival of the Slytherins.

For a bit, there was no movement- only the crowd and its cheering, the mist and the chill. The field was static, charged with energy, waiting for those who had been called upon.

Jack was about to say something but before his words could touch the microphone, six players in their flowing cloaks of green and silver made their way out of the pavilion. Noah was the first to be out, his hair which was usually in place and well set, ruffled madly by the wind as he sped past the goal hoops and toward his position on the field. Dave was next. The others followed but George couldn’t see Dream.

He looked around, scanned the entire perimeter of the field for another flowing green cloak, a fluffy head of gold. Then he was there, all of a sudden, moving faster than anyone George had seen on a broomstick, and as soon as the crowd spotted him, George heard them all lose their minds.

It was like volcanoes erupting, or like the loud crashing of waves on a stormy shore. Suddenly Dream was here, there, everywhere- the only name anyone could speak- the boy under whose captaincy, Slytherin hadn't lost a single match.

Dream slowed to a halt in the middle of the field, waving as Floris had, only he seemed so much bigger, even more in his element than the Gryffindor captain did. His broom seemed more like an extension of himself, another body part, rather than something he had picked up.

George did not realize that he had been staring open-mouthed until he felt Karl's gentle finger slip under his chin and close it.

"Don't swoon in public,"

George felt warmth engulf his neck and his cheeks. Did Karl absolutely have to say things like that?

"Who replaced Nick?" He asked, desperate to shift the spotlight from himself.

"Dave." Karl said. "Nick plays as the Seeker usually."

Sometimes, George felt like he lived under a rock, that he should know this stuff, he should know Quidditch. He knew the basics, he lacked the interest to know who played in what position for which house.

The match finally commenced, the Quaffle was shot up into the air, a Gryffindor chaser taking possession of it almost immediately. Slytherin beaters- Noah and Minx, threw merciless Bludger after Bludger at the chaser. Ultimately, Noah's bludger got the poor chaser and the Quaffle dropped from her hands.

George saw as the Chasers from both the teams rushed to catch it, the falling Quaffle becoming the eye of the storm, Slytherin cheers roaring over the Gryffindors. In a heartbeat, the Quaffle had been taken. Dream moved so fast, becoming one with the wind, cheating it occasionally, the Quaffle secured firm in his hands, as he sped toward the Gryffindor hoops.

He was being chased, but it was almost hilarious, given how much faster he was than literally all of them. Floris, the Keeper, clutched the warm wood of this broom tighter as he saw Dream approach, ready to fend off any scoring shots.

Dream made for the center hoop, his eyes fixed on the encircled space. Floris secured his position close to it, ready to leap at the Quaffle and catch it as soon as it is thrown. Dream lifted his hand, his arm poised, shoulder strong, but at the last second, he whipped around and threw the Quaffle into the left hoop behind Floris.

Cheers, louder than the bellowing of a thousand lions, erupted among the students as Slytherin's score went up by ten points.

Tommy repeated a chant of "*That was so fast!*" into the microphone as Jack made comments on how clever the sudden twist was. George felt his hands go cold at how deft Dream could be. He had seen him play before but that was all. He had seen, not *observed*. He had merely grazed the surface with his eyes, he had never looked for the detail, the genius of it all. The genius that was Dream.

In no time, the Quaffle was up again. Sometimes the Gryffindors scored, sometimes their opponents. There was always just a goal or two's difference between the two, most of the Slytherin ones being made by Dream. It was almost like Slytherin did not need three Chasers for themselves, just Dream would do the trick, any day.

George had to force himself to tear his eyes away from him and look for Noah too. Surely he would like comments on his performance after the match, and George was done lying for a little while. He would like to be honest in his praise for Noah, he deserved that.

George searched the field for the boy and when he found him, Noah was aiming a bludger at an opponent. The heavy ball settled so naturally in his practiced palm. In the blink of an eye, he had thrown it. George followed it and watched it land squarely on the arm of the Gryffindor chaser carrying the Quaffle. She must have been hit really hard since she tumbled, and losing balance, she fell off of her broom.

Thankfully, she had not been flying too high so the fall did not injure her, but she had been given a time out before she could return to the field.

Finally, the Snitch was spotted, Dave and the Gryffindor seeker already speeding after it, trying to outrun one another. In the meantime, Slytherin seemed to have a permanent hold on the Quaffle, scoring goal after goal, but it was their Keeper that caused them grief. The boy allowed multiple Quaffles through the hoop whenever the Gryffindors were in possession of it, until it was snatched back by a Slytherin Chaser, which happened to be Dream most of the times.

The scoreboard stood at 100-120, the Slytherins having the lead. The golden snitch buzzed around the field so fast that George could never keep up. After following it for a while, he gave in and settled on watching the other players instead. It was shortly after that, that he saw Noah direct a Bludger at the Gryffindor Seeker, which caught the girl on her shoulder, making her crash into a flagpole nearby. Dave got the advantage and giving a final push, he flew faster than he had during the entirety of the match.

In no time, his fingers held a little, jittery snitch between them.

The crowd went absolutely crazy, with their chants of *Slytherin! Slytherin! Slytherin!*

He was pulled into a hug by Karl who was nearly jumping in excitement, as though it wasn't Slytherin but Ravenclaw that had won.

"Nick would be so happy!"

"I'm sure! I'm sure!" George said, but he doubted his best friend could hear him over the thunderous crowd. His eyes wandered back to the field, and he saw Dream flying to Dave, patting him on the back then tugging him into a one-armed hug.

He was ecstatic, his eyes the brightest shade of jade there was, gleaming with the victory at hand. George couldn't find it in himself to look away from the strong, confident build of him, the way he held himself, high and proud but still humble and respectful. His breath caught in his throat when he saw Dream flying to Noah. He did not hug the Beater, they did not shake hands. They talked, because they had to, because he was the captain and he was meant to congratulate every member of the team, especially when it was Noah that knocked off the opponent Seeker.

George could see there was no warmth in their interaction, anyone could see it if they looked hard enough.

“Will you go?” Karl asked. “To the after-party?”

George turned around. Coming were the moments he had been dreading. His gut stiffened and his legs begged him to run back to his dorm. He knew he couldn’t.

“I will.” George confirmed, despite himself. “Are you coming?”

“I’ll pass. I’m supposed to be in the library for a few hours.”

George nodded in understanding and as he bid farewell to his best friend, he braced himself for what was coming next.

I can do it.

Chapter End Notes

thankyou so much for giving this work your time and love! let me know how you liked this chapter in the comments!

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boyfriend

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The stony Slytherin corridor was cold as the winter. George made the mistake of leaning against a wall for too long and now his arm felt thoroughly frozen. The cold had bitten into his skin, but he had welcomed it. He did not want to be thinking about all the ways the party could turn into a disaster for him. He'd rather be cold.

He waited for Noah to show up, hoping with all that he had in him, that the boy changes his mind about the party, that he abandons George before George could abandon him, but he knew that it wasn't a very likely possibility.

He heard laughter and cheers from the other end of the corridor after a while. They were here, he knew it.

The place was not devoid of other people, it was packed in fact, but in that moment, all he heard and saw were the Slytherin team. The tip-tap of their shoes against the stone floor, the array of praise and profanities, and a million other things they were talking about, it all surrounded George.

Dream stopped when he saw him standing there, his arm that had been wrapped around another teammate slipped back down to his side. The others stopped with him, their eyes questioning and pupils blown wide with the heat of the win.

"What're you doing here?" He asked.

Before George could reply, he felt a firm hand sliding up his shoulder, an arm thrown around his neck. Suddenly, everything was warmer.

"He's with me," Noah spoke.

George felt more than saw Dream's eyes on them, their heat unmistakable. He knew he ought to say something, a gentle '*congratulations!*' or '*good job!*' but his throat felt parched and words seemed leagues away.

He let Noah lead him, press him to his side. He was being spoken to, but he wasn't sure that he really heard it. All he was feeling was a stony heaviness in his chest, dropping down to his gut, refusing to leave.

"Are you okay?" Noah asked.

"Yeah... Yeah. Just a little cold," George replied. "The dungeons are always this way."

"Do you want my cloak?"

Images, sharp and vivid as a scorching desert sun flashed across his mind. He could almost feel the soft material, the extraordinarily huge size of it, the fragrance he couldn't help but keep reaching out for.

Keep it.

You need it more than I do.

“No, I’m good.”

*

The Slytherin common room was a warm, crowded mess. Green and blue lights spilled everywhere from the enchanted disco balls set up on the ceilings. This place looked like victory and lust and sin.

The entire room erupted into cheers as soon as the team set foot inside. George saw as Dave was lifted into the air by some people, the chants of ‘*Slytherin! Slytherin! Slytherin!*’ mixing with the sweat, alcohol, and euphoria. He saw familiar faces, a lot of them being people from his own year, some from the ones below, others he did not know.

He felt Noah’s arm slip from around his shoulders, to his waist. He looked up to see Noah’s gaze already on him, his lids slightly hooded.

“Is this okay?” He whispered into George’s ear.

George felt his limbs go stiff and stubborn. No matter how much he had wanted this previously, he could not find it in himself to continue it now. He took Noah’s hand in his and gently let it fall from his waist.

“I’ll go get us something to drink,” He spoke, leaving a slightly frowning Noah behind.

George walked to the far end of the common room, heavy curtains covering the windows there. There was a little table with plastic cups holding clear liquid, George picked one up and sniffed. It seemed safe to drink though he didn’t know what it really was. The lack of proper lights made it hard to discern anything.

“It’s just vodka and soda,”

George turned to his side, finding Dream leaning carelessly against the wall. He had done away with his Quidditch cloak, only a shirt with its sleeves folded up to his elbows remained, and the dark uniform pants.

“I would never have known if your genius arse didn’t step in,” George mocked.

“Do I hear some sarcasm?”

“No, you hear mountains of it.”

As George made to leave, two cups in his hands, he felt a harsh tug on his cloak from behind him. He spilled some of the contents of the cups on to the floor, thankfully nothing landing on his clothes.

“Dream, what the fu-” He began, but then he saw that the cloak had been caught on a nail that jutted out from the wooden table.

“Your obsession with me is hilarious,” Dream spoke, as his slender fingers reached out to separate the cloth from the nail.

“I’m not obsessed with you,”

“Is that why you still have *my* cloak?” Dream asked.

George felt his heartbeat pick up a painful pace. He wanted to say something but what was there to

tell Dream? That he had been sleeping nestled into its warmth and comfort? That it had become as much a part of his nights as the moon and the cold?

“Is that for Noah?” Dream asked, pointing to one of the cups when George stood silent.

“It... it is.”

All of a sudden, the common room felt too small when Dream took a step toward him. There it was- the fragrance, the warmth, the unsettling feeling in his stomach. He looked straight into the green abyss, unsure of what they held.

They were so close, he could feel Dream’s exhales, the rising and falling of his chest, just a hand’s length away from his own.

“Why *him*?”

The question threw George off guard. He had never expected Dream of all people to be questioning who he chose to spend his time with.

“Why not?” George replied.

“Is he your boyfriend?”

George’s eyes widened. Where was this going? One moment he was mad at George and abandoned him in the Astronomy Tower, and the other he invades his personal space and asks him questions he had no right to be asking.

“It’s none of your business, Dream.”

Saying thus, he pulled away. It took a lot of his will to abandon the warmth. As he turned around to throw a last glance at Dream, he found the taller boy’s jaw set tight. He was annoyed, angry even.

George was here for Noah, Dream could deal with himself.

Chapter End Notes

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firefly

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George wanted to drink more, he wanted to lose himself, anything to escape what he had originally planned to do before coming here. Now that he looked at it, actually hooking up with Noah did not seem like that bad of an idea.

He had no one to answer to, there were no commitments involved. He had nothing to lose.

Dream trying to discourage him from being with Noah had only added fuel to his urge if nothing else. Now that he had been told to not do it, he absolutely wanted to. Maybe he would just let it happen this once, he can always forfeit the arrangement again.

As his back was pressed flush against Noah, he couldn't help but think about how different Dream smelled, how Noah felt like sea salt and mint, and Dream was parchment, chocolates and almonds, and something else he couldn't quite put a finger to.

His eyes closed shut when he felt familiar, slightly dry lips on his neck. It didn't feel all that right, he knew it, he could feel it all over himself. Noah's were not the hands he wanted on his hips, George didn't want to be kissed by him.

Why him?

He wondered the same. Why Noah?

If not him, then who?

Dream, Dream, Dream.

He felt panic rise from his guts to his chest, warming up his neck and face. He willed his head to shut up, he never wanted to hear that name again, not in this context. He abruptly turned around, surprising Noah who almost let go of his hold on George.

In a thoughtless second, he pressed his lips to Noah's. He felt the hands on his hips tighten, the fingers slide smoothly underneath his sweater. With every peck, every move of skin against skin, he became painfully aware of how much he knew this was not going to leave him sated.

Dream, Dream, Dream.

George pulled him closer, he wasn't sure if there was all that much distance to cover anyway. His own hands gripped Noah's shoulders in a stony grip.

"Do you think we should leave?" Noah asked, withdrawing himself slightly.

George felt his guts grow tighter. He knew that all he had to do was say the truth to get himself out of this situation with Noah. But at this point, he wasn't even sure what the exact truth was.

"Um.. I think.. I don't know, Noah." George spoke.

The green lights spilled across his face, George could see the traces of confusion and a frown.

"Are you okay?" Noah asked. "You've seemed so out of it all evening."

George's heart swelled to see that Noah had noticed. Maybe this was going to be easier than he thought, after all.

"I don't think I want to continue with this. I tried to, but... ugh,"

"Does this have anything to do with me?" Noah asked. "Do you feel pressured into doing this?"

George's eyes widened. This wasn't exactly how he felt, he did not feel pressured into doing anything in a bad way. It was just that he did not want to hurt Noah in the process.

"I don't. I just think this is not something I want to do right now. I considered it in the first place because you offered me something." George explained. "I was wrong, I guess, in saying yes."

"But... but you just kissed me!"

"I know! I'm sorry, I shouldn't have lead you on like that,"

None of them spoke for a while. George wanted nothing more than to leave, but somehow that felt like a crueler thing to do. So he stayed, letting Noah hold his hands.

"If not tonight, will I ever get to be with you again?" He asked and George's heart cracked a little for him. He was desperate to get whatever of George he could have, whatever he was allowed.

"I don't know. But I promise to tell you right away if I change my mind."

Noah nodded. The play of lights on his skin made him all the more prominent to George. He was a good guy, he deserved so much more.

"Do you want to have another drink?"

"I'll pass," George said. "Congratulations on winning, though. You were so great today,"

Noah smiled a smile that didn't reach his eyes. They didn't get smaller, there was no warmth. George wondered if he had said the right thing. He knew he hadn't been all that gentle tonight.

Fuck Dream and his interference. He would never have let himself kiss Noah only to tell him to cancel their plans if Dream hadn't confused him.

"Bye, George," Noah said. "I'll be here whenever you want to continue with this."

George had never felt so light and heavy, all at the same time. He walked out of the common room, the cold finally returning, biting harder this time than it had in a while. He felt terrible for messing with someone like that. He could have totally avoided this, he just didn't choose to.

Before he knew it, he was standing at the threshold of the prefects' bathroom.

"Firefly," He mumbled the password, making the doors swing open for him.

The tip-tap of his shoes echoed under the high ceilings and off the walls. He slid his robe off and was about to touch the tip of his wand to the enormous bath to warm it up, when the surface of the water rippled once, then twice, bubbles breaking out and within seconds, there emerged a head from it.

George turned around swiftly, unable to look at the sight before him directly. There would be consequences he wouldn't want to go through if he did.

“Did your boyfriend abandon you?”

Why did it have to be Dream here, of all people?

He felt Dream swim closer to the edge he was standing by. The sloshing of the water was the only sound for a bit, the subdued golden lights of the chandelier candles the only illumination.

“Turn around.” Dream said. “Look at me when I’m talking to you.”

“I don’t have to,” George challenged.

“Am I too much for you?” Dream spoke and his smirk could practically be heard.

George swallowed thickly. He had hoped for some respite from the cutting tension in the Slytherin common room, but here he was, walking into still more of it. Even though he knew that Dream was joking, that he liked to think that everyone was oh so into him, he wished that the joke hadn’t been so close to his reality.

Dream was, with every passing day, becoming too much for him.

Chapter End Notes

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water

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Reluctantly, he turned around. He tried to not look too long at the little drops of water clinging to Dream's pale skin, sliding subtly down his collarbones, clinging to his hair. His biceps swelled as he crossed his arms over the edge, his elbows hanging out.

"Why are *you* not at the party? It was your team that won after all," George questioned.

"I can be wherever I want,"

George sighed. Why had he ever expected that he would be getting a satisfactory answer out of Dream?

"Well be here then," He said and turned to leave.

Something swift and wet, caught at his white, cotton sleeve, tugging him backward. He was too tired to protest, too drained to pull away and leave. So he sat by the water's edge, silent and still. Dream withdrew his fingers, leaving a cold, wet spot on the fabric that chilled George's skin.

"Did Noah do something?"

"Why are you so interested in him and me? If only you had let me be, things wouldn't have messed up so badly," George spoke, the frustration getting the best of him. He immediately regretted saying so much when he saw Dream's brows knitted in question.

"Did you break up or something?"

"No, you idiot!" George half-yelled. "We were never together!"

There was no response. George couldn't find it in himself to look back and check if Dream was still there, if he had gone underwater again, playing whatever stupid breath-holding game he had been at earlier.

"I had never thought you were a hook-up person,"

George's nose scrunched up at the odd statement. He pushed back his hair that was falling into his eyes, making them itch slightly.

"Why were you thinking about my relationship preferences?"

"I wasn't,"

A chuckle escaped George at how quick Dream was to refute him.

"You so were,"

All of a sudden, he felt warm water hit the back of his shirt, seeping through its pores and wetting his skin. He turned around at lightning pace to see Dream splashing more water at him. He held his hands up in defense and tried moving away, but Dream's strong hand held him by his elbow, not letting him escape. Before he knew it, he was almost soaked.

“Are you done, you literal child?!” George yelled as Dream wheezed, the way he always did when he laughed too hard.

He watched his golden head fall back, the wet hair spraying drops of water everywhere. George found his eyes fixating on the pale skin of his throat, the bulge of his Adam’s apple, the way water slid in haphazard trails down his face and neck and chest.

Dream had moved closer, a casual hand laying in George’s lap as he sat back down, sprawled over his thigh.

“I have an idea,”

“Don’t say it,” George spoke. “I already know it’s a pathetic one,”

“No! Shut up and listen to me,”

One of his hands was gripping George’s wrist now, as if keeping him from going away, making sure he stayed in place. George felt a trail of blazing fire where his skin met Dream’s, his fingers feeling like the surface of a sizzling star.

“What?”

He could hear himself blush in his voice. The smile he was trying to hide, the hints of peace and warmth, he wanted to cover it all, but it leaked into his words, spread all over his skin.

“Wet your hair,” Dream spoke low, his voice curling over every syllable.

George’s eyes widened. He looked at Dream to make sure if he was serious. There were no traces of amusement, nothing to show mockery, just curiosity shining bright in those jade orbs.

“Why would I do that?”

“I just want to see how it looks,” Dream said. “Please,”

Something unlocked in him, a newfound tenderness branched its way into his chest. Dream had never said that word to him. Dream had never requested, always demanded, commanded, mocked.

Any will in him to refuse the boy sublimated, and all he was left with was a silent tug at his hand, to move it, to submerge it in the abundance of clear, warm liquid before him.

Dream’s fingers fell off of his wrist and almost immediately, George let the water make space for him, consume his hand and wrap around his skin. He cupped his palm to hold some water in it, a thin, glistening stream of it slipping from between his fingers as he pulled it out. His eyes flicked back to Dream’s for a second.

“I hate you,” He said and without letting another second go, brought his hand to his hair, wetting the strands and his scalp and running his fingers through them. He would never understand why Dream wanted to cause this mess, but here it was anyway.

“Get some more water!”

“No,” George protested. “Fuck you.”

But there Dream was, with his *please* and *just this once!*

If he was going to be doing this every time he wanted something done, George was going to have

to find a way to make himself immune to it, or it would be a bigger problem than he could manage. Reluctantly, he scooped some of it up again, long streaks of warm water running down the sides of his face as he poured it over his head, messing the dark fluff with his fingers some more.

He closed his eyes, and put his head down in his hands, only to smooth back his hair, his cotton shirt nearly transparent in the places where it got wet.

Dream had been quiet, almost too quiet. George did not need to look at him to know that he was being watched. He could never mistake the heat of his gaze, he had had it on him one too many times, sometimes in anger, sometimes in confusion, and at other times when he couldn't fathom what went on inside Dream's head.

"Are you done looking?" George asked.

"I-well, no." Dream spoke. "I mean, I wasn't... I wasn't, like, looking,"

It was George's turn to be amused. He let out a little laugh, shaking his head. Dream was so quick to defend himself always. He slipped the tips of his fingers into the water again, just letting them stay there, become a part of it.

"It's okay," George said. "You can look."

Chapter End Notes

as you can see, the scene was inspired by a real-life event XD how many fandoms can say that?

anyway, thank you for reading, and please let me know what you think in the comments!

i hope you've all been keeping well and taking care of yourselves <3

wrong

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George had no idea what last night had been. He could not fathom how he got the courage to say all that he said, do all that he had done. He hadn't even drunk all that much.

Dream had only proceeded to soak him some more, almost pulling him into the water, but George somehow saved himself. They had thrown around causal taunts at each other for a while before George began to yawn, his lids getting heavy as lead.

"Go back and sleep, you idiot," Dream had said.

George had only shook his head, splashed some water back at Dream before caving in to his tired, weighted limbs. He had gotten up and Dream had followed him to the door, a towel wrapped around his otherwise naked self. George pretended he did not see any of that, that Dream was just a voice in the air.

"We still hate each other, right?" He had asked.

"Of course," George had spoken. "You're still the biggest arse I've ever had the misfortune to know. Look at how much you've soaked me for no reason at all,"

Dream had only laughed.

He had walked back with a smile, the tops of his cheeks hurting from it. He didn't remember anything after it, he didn't know when he got into bed and fell into a deep slumber, he didn't know when he drew *the cloak* out again.

The only reminder that last night had happened was that George woke up with a runny nose and heavy head, his eyes refusing to stay open for more than a few seconds at a time.

Karl passed him some warm, gingered tea at the Ravenclaw table, which he gratefully accepted even though he wasn't much of a tea with breakfast person.

"How was last night?" Karl asked. "You came in pretty late,"

"I didn't enjoy it all that much. Gryffindor parties are so much better,"

"You know I wasn't talking about the party,"

George set his cup down, his fingers lingering on the warm porcelain as he contemplated telling Karl the entire truth. His best friend had never given him much reason to distrust him, but this time it was different. This time he happened to be the boyfriend of someone who was literally Dream's best friend.

"I... I rejected Noah," George said. "He took it surprisingly well though. I was expecting some drama,"

Karl giggled, putting some more eggs into his plate.

"Who has ever fought you?"

*

George's potion seemed immaculate as always. He had no clue how he had got this one right, given that he was making it for the first time and the Professor had told them that it took a few tries to really make it well. He went over the ingredient checklist a last time to make sure that he had not missed out on anything.

"How did you get that color?" Niki asked, peeping into his cauldron.

"Don't stick to the instructions," George said. "Add more black feathers to make it as dark as this,"

Niki's brow lifted. "Wouldn't that mess with the texture?"

"Heat it up more, simple."

Her mouth curved into an *oh* of wonder and she thanked him before returning to her own potion.

George was pretty sure that he was the first one to have finished and make it correctly in the first go, but when he heard the Professor's cry of delight from the back of the room, he whipped around in horror.

"Clay, this is fabulous!" He said. "He made it in a single attempt, everyone!"

George clenched his teeth. He had really hoped that he made it first, but as it seemed, the universe had other plans. He did not join the others as they clapped for Dream, he did not respond when the Professor asked if anyone else had managed to make the potion. He hid in the shadows once more, he told himself he did not need all that recognition, that what mattered was that he had the skill and he got the potion right.

He told himself a lot of things, how many did he believe?

As the class neared an end, he scooped his book and notes up and walked swiftly out of the class. He was almost out of the dungeons when he heard his name yelled from behind him. He stopped in his tracks, letting Dream catch up to him.

"I can't believe you didn't get the potion," He said, rounding up to stand in front of him.

George knew this was coming. Dream had never let go of a chance to make George aware of how he wasn't better at something than him. But today really wasn't the day. Today, his patience ran thin as a sewing thread.

"Who said I didn't?" George asked. "I just chose not to lick the Professor's butt about it,"

"It's okay to lose sometimes, George. You don't have to be mean to me,"

George only huffed out in annoyance. He knew he could not lash out like last night or he would end up telling Dream things he did not want to tell anyone.

They walked in silence, Dream occasionally kicking a pebble out of his way, sometimes away from George, sometimes directly at him. He would find it to be the funniest thing whenever he managed to hit George with a little stone and George would furrow his brows and scrunch up his nose.

"Why won't you leave?" George asked as they neared the Alchemy room. Dream did not even take that subject.

“Why do you take such weird classes? Who even studies Alchemy?”

“It’s a good compliment for Potions,”

They stopped, the room being just around the corner, the hallway empty of anyone but them. Dream was right, there weren’t many that studied Alchemy, and those who did, came in through the main hallways, not a sneaky side one like this that took much longer to reach the class.

Dream leaned against the wall, his book pressed to his chest as his arms held it close.

“Is that what you love?” Dream asked. “Potions?”

“Like you don’t know that already,”

“Is that why you were so pissed? Because I finished earlier than you did?”

George’s head immediately twisted his words up to mean something they did not, and he smiled, looking down at his shoes.

“That sounds so wrong,”

Dream lifted a brow in confusion and then it hit him.

“George!”

George laughed, his head turning to the side, dark eyes getting smaller till the only thing you could see in them were the warm browns.

“Let me go to class, you idiot,”

They stood there for a while, a bird singing somewhere and the quiet occasional footsteps of students being the only sounds. George was still smiling a bit, he hoped it would die down. He wanted to leave, his class would start any moment now, but here he was.

The green fire that had always seemed so malicious, so bent to harm and to kill, looked warm and playful, home in Dream’s eyes.

“I’m not holding you back,” Dream spoke, his gaze locked with George’s.

George looked away, his skin turning a gazillion shades of crimson. It was true, he could leave if he wanted to, right this second.

“You couldn’t,” George challenged. “Even if you wanted to,”

He watched Dream sigh, his eyes closing shut. His green Head Boy badge glimmered as the slanting light from the torches fell upon it.

“Don’t tempt me to prove you wrong, George.”

George swallowed thickly, his eyes trained on Dream who took a slow step toward him. George could touch his green and silver tie if he wanted to, he could give it a little pull. His eyes shot back up to Dream’s face, the focus it held matching his own.

“Prove me wrong,”

Chapter End Notes

well.... here we are, i guess. thankyou so much for reading! let me know what you think in the comments and I hope you have a nice day/night <3

Also, you *might* get a bonus chapter next week b/w tuesday and Saturday. I'm not promising anything, it just depends on how much I'm able to get myself to write :P

sheets

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

He felt like he was in the dark, Slytherin common room once again. The way he had felt Dream's presence, so unimaginably close to him, his warmth, all the million shades of longing he had felt in a matter of seconds, it all came back. Anyone could see them, there was a single wall hiding them from the rest of the world.

A single wall away, he had a class going on. He needed to attend it, but despite all that he needed to do, despite knowing what must be done, he couldn't do it.

George stepped back until he hit a pillar. Dream's finger slipped under his chin, the way it had back in the Astronomy Tower. He felt Dream's arm that held his books press against his own, the threads poking out of their woolen sleeves intertwining.

Dream leaned down until his lips were at George's ear, he could almost feel them against his skin and George's eyes closed shut. All that every sense of him could perceive was this boy before him, George's head was full of him and he knew there was no way out. He had allowed this, he had brought this upon himself.

"I thought you had a class to attend," He whispered.

"I... I do,"

"You still want to be proven absolutely wrong?"

George could only hum out his response. The proximity was making his head so clouded he feared he might end up speaking a bunch of gibberish.

"I already have," Dream spoke softly and leaned away, before backing up and turning to leave George.

"What?" George protested. "This doesn't count!"

"It so does, you know it," Dream said and finally took his leave.

George watched him walk away for a bit, before hesitantly making his way to the Alchemy class, which he was a good few minutes late for.

*

As George sat waiting for his score on the Arithmancy test, he could not stop his leg from bobbing up and down. The professor had been giving him displeased looks from the moment he had entered, which scared him more than he thought it would.

As the man moved between the tables, handing everyone their sheets with their marks in red at the top right, his heartbeat rose every second.

"Where the hell was your good old brain when you solved this, Davidson?" The Professor asked, practically slamming the paper on George's desk before moving ahead.

George flipped through the sheets, scanning his answers and the procedures he had penned down for each. His eyes moistened as he realized that all that went wrong was literal little things that he could have prevented if only he had paid more attention.

He had never scored this low on a test before, let alone Arithmancy, something he was supposedly good at.

“Are you okay?” Karl asked from beside him.

“Just got a really bad score,”

George rubbed at his eyes. Suddenly, everything was too bright, too loud, too much.

“What is it? 98?” Karl joked.

“Oh, fuck off,”

Before he could stop Karl, his answer sheets had been swiped from his table and into his best friend’s hands. George ran his fingers through his hair, tugging at the roots. This was one of his recurrent nightmares and he knew that they would only increase in frequency now.

“Well, at least you’ve got more than I have,” Karl spoke, handing the papers to him.

George did not even want them back. Karl could have it and use it for whatever little origami stuff he liked to make sometimes.

“This... this is embarrassing,” George said. “I have let some important people down,”

Karl squeezed his shoulder but George could not bring himself to look at him, or say anything more.

“I’m still proud of you,”

George took Karl’s hand in his under the table and absently fiddled with his rings. He was glad to have him right there, his heart swelled at the words Karl said, but he did not know if he deserved it right now.

“Thank you,”

*

Chapter End Notes

hello! i hope you've all been well since the last time we interacted <3 i hope you enjoyed reading this part and I can't wait for you to read the next ones! we are going to be boarding a rollercoaster when it comes to George in this fic, so buckle up and cling tight :P

thankyou for being here!

Twitter: @/IcedTales

Update schedule: Tuesdays and Saturdays

taunts

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The wooden tables in the Divination room were overflowing with papers, bits of frozen candle wax stuck to the surface and George scratched at one of them with his fingernail.

He was supposed to be transcribing a recorded Astronomy lecture from Professor Phil, but the grainy voice from the little recorder on his table only served as something to fill the background.

Dream was surprisingly quiet too, his nimble fingers rolling up huge parchment sheets and tying them up in the middle with blue threads of silk. George could never be that quick or sure in his movements, he would constantly be messing up the rolls or tying the threads too loose.

“Are you done with it, George?” The Professor asked.

He sat up with a start, pulling the sheets he had earlier been working on closer to himself. He rewound the lecture tape, putting it at a time which was a few seconds before he had zoned out.

“I’m on it, Professor,”

As he put down the words he heard on to the blank, staring parchment, he realized he was making way too many mistakes. Sometimes he repeated words, at other times he heard them incorrectly, and at still others, more embarrassing moments, he found himself writing *Dream* when the word he had heard had been *Dawn*, or *Declination*.

That drew the line for him. He touched his wand to the parchment to free it of all the little splattered drops of ink and cuts on it, so that only clean, correct text remained. Upon doing so, he found that he had done very little actual work. He had been sitting here for close to an hour and all that he had managed were a few sentences.

He looked at his hands, ink-stained and pale, so pale. Karl had always urged him to paint his nails in those pale blues and pinks that he said would suit George. He had never taken up his best friend’s advice. He liked them better like this, with paper cuts and ink seeping into the lines of his palms.

“Are you okay?”

He looked up from his hands at the sound of Dream’s voice.

“Why do you ask?”

“You’re not verbally violent today,”

George smiled, probably for the first time that day. He dipped his quill in the inkpot again, and getting rid of the excess ink at the tip, he restarted the recording.

“I’m fine, but I’d like to work,”

He had actually managed to make some progress this time. Apart from spilling ink, *twice*, all over the place, and accidentally tearing up three parchment rolls, he did not mess up all that much. When he was packing for the night, having handed four written sheets of text to the Professor, he

felt a little tug on his robe.

“What?” He asked, turning around.

“You’re not really fine,” Dream spoke. “Are you?”

George inhaled deeply. He did not want to be answering this question, not now, not ever.

“Just don’t... don’t ask me that,”

Dream bit his lip, his fingers messing with the ends of his dark sweater. He focused at some point on George’s sleeve, carefully avoiding his gaze.

“It’s... It’s not like I’m here for you or anything, but- but it gets a bit boring without your taunts, you know?” Dream said, George had never seen him get so awkward before.

Before he could stop it, a giggle escaped his lips. Dream was so bad at this, it was hilarious.

“It’s okay,” George spoke. “You can say that you can’t live without me,”

“That’s not what I meant but- okay.” Dream said. “Fuck you, if that’s what would make you get back to being you, so be it,”

George laughed, shaking his head. This boy was impossible.

“I would say thank you and shit, but you’re not *‘here for me or anything’* so I’ll skip that,”

Dream laughed along this time. The moonlight surrounded them, spilled in between, washed them over. It was ridiculous how Dream did not even have to try and George would smile and make jokes and do everything that he should do more of.

Just like that, there it was again, the misty silence that always fell after a moment like this. The silence that did not demand filling, not necessarily with words.

“You-you have ink on your face,”

George’s hand immediately shot up to his cheek, rubbing slightly.

“Where?”

“Closer to your mouth, on the left,”

George attempted to wipe it off, but one look at the expression on Dream’s face and he knew he was still not at the right place.

“Help me,” He spoke softly, softer than he had intended.

Dream sucked in a sharp breath, before his hand moved up to touch the corner of George’s mouth. He watched as the shorter one blinked rapidly, his skin getting warmer by the second. He rubbed the dark smear away with the pad of his thumb, lingering by George’s bottom lip. Before he could let himself go out of line and give in to his urges, before he could feel with his fingers what George’s mouth felt like, he withdrew himself.

There was so much more color to George’s otherwise pale skin now.

“You could have used your wand,”

George struggled to keep his breathing in check, his skin still burned where Dream had touched him.

“I could have, didn’t cross my mind,”

George only nodded and as he turned to leave, Dream spoke up again.

“Is it... is it a problem that I didn’t?”

George felt his heart stop for a beat. He silently repeated the question to himself.

Was it a problem? Was it a problem? Was it a problem?

“No,” George spoke finally. “It’s fine,”

Chapter End Notes

plays Taunt by Lovejoy

hello! how're you all doing?

Thanks for reading this work and giving it your time, do let me know in the comments what you think <3

socials if you wanna interact-

Twitter: @/IcedTales

Tumblr: @/keatingwilde

yellow envelope

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

All through that week, George got back less than satisfactory marks on almost every essay or test. He did not know what was going wrong. It was like everything went down a gradual slope ever since the Charms test. When he went over his mistakes, he almost never found there to be a concrete one. It was always something he could have prevented had he just paid a little bit more attention to the question, or when he was framing out the text.

He had absolutely no idea how to stop this, all he knew was that he had to. This had happened before but that was years ago. But this time, when he had to be taking his NEWTs, he could not afford for it to happen, or he could kiss goodbye to his dreams.

He studied almost religiously, taking a few days off of his Astronomy duties, spending almost all his time outside of classes in the library, taking notes, reading or following through with an assignment.

As much as he loved to sleep, he cut himself a little short on that as well. He slept late into the night and woke himself up a couple of hours before whenever his first class was. He almost never saw anyone else, sometimes Karl would bring him food in the common room when he had ditched the Great Hall for dinner or lunch.

His best friend had expressed his concerns over this schedule, but George had reassured him that it was only a matter of time till he was back at the grades he liked to receive. He would go a little easier on himself then.

Every day felt like a competition, a race, against himself. Sometimes, when he spent too long on a question or had to read a text multiple times and still not get a word, he would get frustrated beyond limits, so much so that he would end up on the floor, staring at the ceiling. If he was unfortunate, he would cry and deal with a massive headache later.

Dream tried to talk to him in Potions once.

“Haven’t seen you in a while, where are you always?” He had asked.

“In your head, it seems.” George had replied. “Can’t stop thinking about me now, can you?”

That had shut Dream up for long enough and George had had the chance to escape before the conversation got to escalate.

But things really tested him when he came back to a letter resting on his table as he retired to his dorm after classes.

“I had gone to the owlery to fetch my letters,” Karl said from his bed. “There was one for you too.”

George picked the light yellow envelope up, immediately recognizing the neat, small hand of his mother. He pulled at the little golden knob of his drawer, getting his letter opener out.

The sheet of parchment that sat within was slightly folded at one of the corners. George smoothened it out as he lay the letter open at his table and switched the reading lamp on. The warm

light washed over the surface, he hoped it was not bright enough to wake someone up.

His eyes swept over the words, growing larger with every second, his breath getting more difficult to catch. He never realized he was crying until he saw his tears land on the yellow parchment and turn it to a dark brown.

“Karl,” He nearly whispered, his voice sounding foreign to his own ears.

He looked to the side to see his best friend’s chest rising and falling in a gentle rhythm, slow, soft snores escaping him.

The lump in his throat was growing impossibly huge, he struggled to swallow, to keep his tears from spilling over the edge again as his hands shook, steps away from his entire self following suit.

He needed to get out of there.

He crumpled the letter in his fist, shoved it into the deep pockets of his robes, and ran out. Zooming out of the common room, rushing down the stairs, he did not care if someone saw him out so late. He did not care about detention. He did not care.

He ran, something he seldom did, his lungs screaming for help, burning in their own cold, blue fire.

He did not care.

It was not until he had stepped foot inside the looming Astronomy Tower, was at the doorstep of the observatory, where he knew he would find a certain someone, that he stopped, catching all the breaths he had lost. Nothing seemed enough, the hole in his chest widened and widened and widened.

The door was open, Dream standing before one of the largest telescopes George had ever seen. His long fingers spread over the white surface of it, his eyes chasing the stars. Before George could think twice about it, he knocked.

Dream whipped around, rushing to the door as soon as he saw a panting George, barely keeping himself upright.

“George?”

“Dream I-”

The tears he had been so carefully holding back, slipped down his reddened cheeks with a mind of their own. George had no control over them anymore. He looked down, shrinking into himself, showing as little of him to Dream as he could.

“Hey,” Dream spoke. “What’s wrong?”

He looked up when he felt large, warm hands close over his arms, their fingers digging lightly into his flesh through the robes.

“I didn’t know where else to go,” George’s voice broke in the end as he walked straight into Dream, burying his face into the woolen shoulder.

For a heartbeat, Dream did not close his arms around the boy clinging to him. His palms twitched

and the confusion fogging his brain grew thicker. This was as foreign to him as soil on another planet. He could feel the collar of his shirt, the shoulder of his sweater, get gradually moist with tears.

He could not find it in himself to mind it.

He could have imagined anything in the world, every star in the sky falling down in balls of fire, igniting every flammable thing on this planet and beyond, the return of extinct creatures, an apocalypse. But nothing could have made him think of *this*- of George, his slender arms twined around Dream's waist, his soft, dark locks, pressed against the side of his neck, tickling the tip of his nose.

Nothing could have prepared him for it.

His arms, heavy with hesitation, slipped around George's shoulders, a hand sliding into the thick of his hair, tugging softly at the roots, pulling him closer. Dream swallowed thickly, his eyes closing ever so gently when he felt George's delicate exhales hit his neck.

George's frame trembled with light sobs and the cold of the high room, his arms tightening around Dream, his occasional sniffs the only sound in the emptiness.

"Do you want to talk, George?" Dream asked, his tone going soft of its own accord.

When George drew back a little and looked up at him, Dream cupped the side of his face in a warm hand, wiping the pad of his thumb over George's cheek.

"I don't even know why I came here," George spoke. "But... but it felt like you were the only one who would understand,"

His lip trembled with the weight of all that he was holding in, the skin of his nose and his cheeks burning scarlet with the effort of trying to keep himself together.

For a moment, George only looked, his dark gaze cautious, but Dream could see hints of surrender, of vulnerability.

"I'm trusting you," He said, in almost a whisper. "Don't fail me,"

Dream's heart lurched, he was never one to make light of responsibility. His eyes did not leave George's, his thumb still rubbed slow, comforting strokes onto his cloak.

"I promise,"

George sucked in a sharp breath as he looked down, it was then that Dream realized how every bit of them touched, how he could feel the length of George's body pressed warm against his own, how every single physical difference between them was so much more significant this way.

As he began to disentangle himself, he felt the arms around his torso tighten once again.

"No," George said. "*Please?*"

It was as though a wall came crumbling down, shattering what little hesitance Dream did have left. George was pulled close to him again, his head tucked comfortably under Dream's chin.

"Have you... have you ever worked so hard that you forgot everything, even yourself?"

Dream's fingers traced stray lines down George's bicep, over his dark Ravenclaw cloak. He

wished it wasn't there.

"I have,"

"Have you failed despite it?" George asked.

Dream's fingers stilled for a moment as he debated telling the truth or simply skipping past this question.

"I have," Dream confessed. "Terribly,"

George was silent, his breathing soft against Dream's shirt, the sobs had stopped. Dream was glad they did.

"Is that what happened to you?"

He felt George sigh.

"Yeah, somewhat," George spoke. "My mum wrote to me,"

"What did she say?"

George was silent for a bit. Dream did not know if he should ask again, or if he had even said the right thing. He continued his little patterns on George's arm, hoping it helped.

"The Arithmancy Professor and her are friends. He must have written to her about my recent scores," George spoke. "She wasn't pleased. She even went so far as to say that she was disappointed in me,"

Dream involuntarily held George tighter, his heart clenching painfully at the latter's words. He could feel more tears seep into the fabric of his shirt, as George visibly tried to hold back sobs, tried not to shake, and completely break down. He wished he could tell the boy to let go, that he was okay with the mess, that he did not mind.

"Am I a disappointment, Dream?"

The question left George's mouth, only slightly louder than a whisper and Dream could feel it chilling his entire self. The shivers that ran down his spine were vivid, something really close to him. He turned his head, breathing in everything that was George.

"No," Dream spoke into his hair. "And I mean it with everything that I have,"

It was then that George withdrew, his eyes glistening with unshed tears, the white mixed with hues of crimson. It felt unfair, having no control over how he glanced down to George's lips, how he tried not to linger there, how he had to absolutely push himself to look back up, back into the dark, warm brown.

"You do?" George asked.

He felt George's fingers rub circles into the side of his waist, his head fogged up. He knew he had to get away, make some distance between the two of them to really be of use to George right now. He would never be able to think straight with how he felt George, so warm and soft in his hands, how he looked up at Dream like he was the moon and all the stars in the sky, how he would take all that attention away the second his question was answered.

"George, your grades were not even all that bad. Of course, by your standards they sucked a little

bit, but do you really expect yourself to never mess up?" Dream spoke. "What are you, some kind of a god?"

When George stood silent, he continued.

"You are not a disappointment just because you succumbed to burnout or whatever put you in this place," Dream said. "You'll be up and going and kicking my ass at everything in no time again,"

George chuckled and he felt it in his chest, echoing and settling in his heart as if it had come to stay.

"Treat them all like you treat me,"

"What do you mean?" George asked.

"Work to leave them behind, not to please them,"

George looked down, the scarlet in his cheeks never having left. He put his forehead against Dream's shoulder once again.

"What happened to *'not being there for me or anything'?*" George teased.

Dream rolled his eyes, a smile curving its way upon his lips.

"You shouldn't say that when you were the one to almost tackle me down," Dream spoke. "I did it to save my life,"

He could have endured anything that night but not George turning his head, his lips nearly grazing Dream's neck when he spoke, "Do you really want to be saved?"

Dream's fingers found George's hair, he softly tugged at them, made George look up at him again. If Dream were to move another inch now, there would cease to be a gap between them. It scared him, or was it adrenaline?

"Would you rather kill me?"

George smiled, his hands clinging on to Dream's sweater, almost pulling him in.

"Would you like that?"

"Stop answering my questions with questions, George," Dream spoke.

"You started it,"

Dream chuckled, his hold on George's roots loosening as the tips of his fingers idly caressed the soft, dark strands.

"You're such an idiot,"

hello! how are you doing?

thank you so much for reading this chapter and giving it your time <3 please let me know how you liked it in the comments!

New Moon

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Oh, I’m the idiot now?” George asked.

He could not believe that he was really standing here, pressed warm against Dream, intoxicated on him and his gentle humor. Only weeks ago he had been down to kill this man, he still might if provoked enough, but he would let tonight be an exception.

Tonight he decided to walk out of his hate, he did not have the energy for it. He could not carry on with it. Tonight, he let himself flow. He let loose, he trusted *Dream*, with himself.

“You always have been,”

George’s hand traveled to the green tie hanging from Dream’s collar, tracing it with a light finger from the knot till the point where it disappeared into the V-neck of his sweater. He let his touch stay.

Wordlessly, he looked up at Dream, spreading his palm out over the hard surface of his chest.

“I don’t know what I’m doing,” He confessed.

Dream’s heart beat erratically under his fingers, he knew he would hear the lightening fast thumps if he put his ear to it. He knew he would feel them in his own chest should he envelop Dream in a hug again.

“I might slip up,” George spoke when the other stood silent. “And say or do something I wouldn’t usually,”

Dream inhaled deeply, his nails beginning to scratch lightly at George’s scalp.

“Okay,”

George swallowed thickly. He was never one for eye contact, but tonight, he did not want to look at anything else. He was happy with the familiar swirling, green in Dream’s irises, or at least what he thought green was supposed to look like. So much had changed ever since Hogwarts happened to him, they hadn’t. They had always remained intense, vivid, all-consuming. He had never realized how much a part of his day they had become over the years. Until tonight.

Tonight everything hit him all at once, like a meteor shower on an unexpected night.

“Will you forgive me if I stepped out of line?”

“It, um, it depends.” Dream spoke. “On where the line is,”

George closed his hand around the soft material of the tie, pulling it toward himself ever so slowly, knowing Dream would feel it, hoping that he didn’t.

He tilted his face up and when Dream *tugged* at his dark curls harder than he had all night, George’s eyes closed involuntarily. When he opened them again, Dream was much closer, he felt much warmer, their lips a nail’s breadth away.

“Stop me if I cross it,” George whispered.

He felt the point of Dream’s nose brush against his and it took everything in George to stay where he was.

“If I could stop you,” Dream began. “Don’t you think I would have done it by now?”

George could only hope to not combust. If anyone would have told him that he would be *this* close to Dream, having *this* conversation, merely a few hours ago, he would have laughed it off, told the person that it was as impossible as the stars outshining the moon.

What he forgot was that there existed nights like these, what Muggles called the New Moon, when the moon did not show up, when all there was left for the stars, was to shine brighter than her.

Whatever little hold George had left on himself, withered away as Dream’s other hand came up to cup his jaw, ever so gently in his long, firm fingers. He waited for it to happen, for a soft caress of another pair of lips upon his own, he silently *begged* for it, he did not think he had it in him to go on any further like this.

“I can’t believe-”

“*Please.*” George nearly whined. “Fuck that,”

And it happened.

In the blink of an eye, George was tasting mint and apples and something tropical. A familiar heat, just stronger than ever, traveled down his body, pooled in his gut, made itself home between his legs. Something greater than relief, burning a million shades of green and blue, ran through his veins as all he could think of was Dream’s lips, pressed against his.

Finally.

He clutched on to the dark Slytherin cloak, the material gathering in his fist, his other hand still pulling at the tie, hoping to bring Dream *closer, closer, closer*. He was not close enough yet, not for George, even though their lips moved against each other, his mouth falling open in a gasp when Dream pulled at his hair yet again.

Even when he allowed Dream’s tongue to slip in, to brush against his own, to explore his mouth and *claim it*, Dream still wasn’t close enough. George still needed him closer. His heart smiled when he felt Dream’s hand slide down to his waist, slip inside the cloak, and settle on the band of his trousers. He wished it would go lower, and as his fingers dug into George’s skin through the layers of wool and linen, he couldn’t hold back a groan of appreciation.

When Dream drew away eventually, George could still taste him on his lips. He found himself wishing it wouldn’t go away, that he could keep returning to it. They were still so close, their breaths mingling, Dream’s chest rising and falling heavily beneath George’s slim, pale fingers. They rested their foreheads against each other, still processing what foggy decisions and a moonless night had led them to.

“Why did you let me do it, George?” Dream asked.

“What?”

“You know this is all I’m going to think about for at least quite some time, right?”

George's skin burned scarlet, the curve of his smile an involuntary force at this point, as he looked down. He had always felt a lot of things whenever he was with Dream over the years- anger, frustration, annoyance. But to feel *shy*, he had never thought would be possible when it came to them.

"Me too,"

The silence fell upon them yet again, George found comfort in the distant hooting of the owls, their combined breaths filling in for the only sound in the room. His hand reached out to Dream's timidly, brushing his knuckles against the latter, who opened up his palm, allowed George's fingers to twine with his own.

"I'm confused," Dream confessed. "Do I go back to being mean to you tomorrow or..."

He stopped and George felt it when he gulped heavily.

"Or?"

"Or do we do *this*?"

George almost laughed, but he knew that this was going to be something to worry about when the night was gone.

"*This*?" George played at being naive, an eyebrow raised.

His smile grew fonder when he heard Dream chuckle, and all of a sudden, they were apart again. Dream's hand smoothed back the hair falling into George's eyes, the tips of his fingers lingering on his skin longer than they should.

He leaned down again, and George met his lips halfway. This time, they were done testing the waters. This time, George opened up, he welcomed Dream in more readily than before, and when Dream opened up in return, he pulled the Slytherin's lip between his teeth.

He felt Dream's hand on his waist slide lower, ghosting over his bottom but never quite touching. It drove him crazy, how much he wanted, and how little he could have, how little he could ask for.

"*This*," Dream spoke when they parted. "Was what I was talking about."

George resorted to hiding his face against Dream's shoulder again, not daring to tilt his head into the crook of his pale neck. He knew he'd end up kissing it, he knew he wouldn't let go without getting a taste.

"Throw that letter away, okay?"

"I can't," George said. "Mum wrote it,"

He felt Dream's hand thread through his hair again, caressing the dark strands, scratching his scalp. He could stand for hours if only Dream would keep on with it.

"Keep kinder letters from her. I know she means to see you do well, but parents... they go overboard sometimes," Dream spoke. "They're also not right all the time,"

"True," George half-whispered.

He still did not know how he felt about tonight. He did not know what the morning would bring. Would the fact that he had just kissed Dream of all people, the one person he couldn't ever have a

single proper conversation with without frustrating himself, finally hit him when he left here?
Would it hit Dream?

He had never been so vulnerable with someone before, save for Karl. But that was different. He never kissed Karl, he never lost himself in his embrace. He never wished to have him closer.

“Now stop clinging to me you sad excuse for a koala bear,” Dream said. “I need to move,”

George laughed properly, for the first time in days. He only tightened his arms around Dream, pressed himself impossibly closer until Dream’s warmth was all he was capable of feeling.

“No,”

Chapter End Notes

hello! how're you holding up?

thank you for reading and do let me know how you liked it in the comments!

also,

KARLNAP MET UP AGAIN IM SCREAMING I FUCKING SLEPT THROUGH IT
BUT IM SO HAPPY FOR THEM T_T

my timezone passionately hates me and makes sure i miss everything colossally
important :)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The Great Hall was sparse today, the enchanted ceiling swirling with dark clouds heavy with rain. There sparked occasional flashes of lightning and George knew he need not worry, it was never going to fall down, but he flinched slightly whenever it got particularly loud.

He tried his hardest to not glance over at the Slytherin table, so far he had been doing spectacularly. Beside him, Karl was rambling on about how stupid a History of Magic essay was, but he could hardly bring himself to pay attention to that.

All that played through his head was last night. No matter how hard he had tried to hold on to every little detail of it, he couldn't. Sleep washed some finer pieces away, faded it all gray, but George remembered how strangely light he had felt, how he had thought that even if just for a moment, nothing in this world could break him. He remembered gentle touches and the harsher ones. He remembered the taste of mint and apples. He remembered wanting more.

He could still feel the tingles it brought under his skin, he had left quietly in the night when Dream had resorted to his telescope again. For the first time, he had not felt too bad about the Slytherin cloak wrapped around him. He slept dreamlessly, he slept his guilt away.

But the morning brought with it the very things they had avoided last night. It brought confusion, it brought uncertainty. What do they do now?

At some point, George had convinced himself to let it all pass as a moment of weakness, fueled by his lack of intimacy with anyone for months, save the brief moments of it with Noah during the party. He let it pass as Dream being Dream, going so far as thinking that this was just another trick of his to disarm George and assert superiority.

He knew he was fooling no one. He had been the one with the longing eyes, the initiator because Dream wouldn't do anything. Because Dream would linger and ghost and brush, but he would never connect, grab and *take*. George had wanted Dream to do all of that last night. So George had asked. He had asked and it had happened, but he still wanted more. And now he cannot ask.

Because how did one ask their competitor to kiss them senseless over and over again? How did one ask them for more?

He had wanted all of that last night and he did not want to think about if he still wanted it. He wanted it closed, gone. This was embarrassing.

"Are you listening to me?" Karl asked, and George jerked to attention.

"Um..."

"You're not," Karl spoke. "What's wrong?"

He had to know. Karl needed to be told. Things had gotten insanely far and he could not keep pretending that they had not. Picking up courage little by little like little shells on a sandy beach he said, "Don't scream, okay?"

"You're scaring me,"

George tried his hardest to just get it out, it was never so hard to talk about anything with Karl. Taking a deep breath, clutching the fork in his palm so tightly that his fingers turned white, he admitted it, for the first time.

“I... I kissed Dream,”

For a bit there was silence, Karl’s eyes going wide, two orbs of glassy blue-gray. His gaze scooted over swiftly to the Slytherin table, looking back and forth between where Dream was sitting and at George beside him.

“Can you stop that?”

“I mean... I shipped you two, I even thought there might be something going on outside of your pretense to hate each other-”

“We never pretended to do that,” George cut in. “I genuinely did not like him,”

“*Did*,” Karl emphasized. “Oh my god, George,”

“I still do not like him,”

“Yeah,” Karl spoke. “So much so that you kissed him,”

George knew there was no defending himself now. There was nothing he could say to turn this around, to not make it seem the way it was being presented. Was there even another way of interpreting it?

“I’m waiting for details you know,”

George sighed. Today was going to be a long day, he felt it in his bones. He started off with the letter, Karl frowning and interjecting to comfort him before he continued further.

“And... and I guess, I was so weak then. I literally could think of nothing else.” George spoke. “And it just happened, like obviously I did not go in with the intention to do it, but... but it just did, you know?”

The entire time Karl smiled at him like he knew something that George did not. It was the longest breakfast he’d had in a while. The Slytherin table still seemed to call out to him from his peripheral vision, but he kept his head straight. He was not looking there, not today, not when he knew that it might be hard to look back and not feel different.

“So... are you together now?” Karl asked and George’s face twisted into an incredulous expression.

“Hell no, just because we kissed - and we are not doing it again-,” George spoke. “It doesn’t mean that I’d like to date him. He’s not someone I see myself with. Like, we’d end up killing each other,”

Karl was smiling like that again, in a way that made George feel that he was not in on a secret that the entire world but him knew. He watched as his best friend got up and hit him lightly on the head.

“We’ll see about that,” Karl said. “The first period’s free. Come hang with the others by the Lake?”

George knew he would not get a better, more welcome distraction than this. He let Karl take him

by the hand and pull them out of the Hall. As they neared the enormous double doors, his resolve finally gave away. He turned his head back to glance at the Slytherins.

He should not have.

Dream had an eyebrow raised in question, his jade gaze fixed on George as the entirety of his group chatted around him. The all too familiar heat making itself home under his skin. George could almost feel Dream's thoughts forming on his own tongue.

Where are you going?

He turned back around, his heart having sped up considerably. He failed to understand why he always acted against his better judgment. His cold fingers closed tighter around Karl's as they walked down the stone corridors and exited one of the shadowy, huge castle gates.

The shore of the lake was sandy, dark nearly in imitation of the water body it lay against. George could feel it crunch beneath the soles of his shoes as he made his way toward the little group sitting almost too close to the water. Judging by the number of people clouding the space that day, it seemed like everybody had the same idea as them to spend their rare free period.

Darryl and Niki were the first ones to spot them, and George smiled when Zak tossed him a little pebble that turned to shimmering glitter as soon as he caught it.

"Don't mind him," Darryl said. "He's been doing that to everyone since he woke up,"

George did not want to dust the shimmer off, he liked how it glimmered under the subtle sun, how it covered his pale skin and made it something better. He let it stay.

"It's okay," George spoke, taking his seat in the rough spread-out circle.

Niki had a little ukulele nestled in her lap and she strummed out some tune. George spotted recognition dawning on Karl's face as his mouth fell open.

"It's that... it's that muggle song! I've heard it, I can't quite remember the name!"

Niki giggled, like the chiming of little bells before she spoke, "It's *Coffee Breath* by Sofia Mills,"

George could feel the soothing, borderline sad tone in his heart as Niki's fingers played it out and she began singing. He watched Karl sway slightly, in time with the song as he looked at George and repeated a whispered string of *'I love this so much'*.

*"Woke up in your new apartment
In your twin-size bed
Coffee starting
Don't remember much
All I know is that you talk too much
Time to go"*

She sang so beautifully, George could cry. There was something in him that demanded to get out, something deep and raw and formless. He did not know what it was. He was not sure how to set it free. He seemed to carry it with him wherever he went, most times it slept, but in times like these- in the embrace of the right music and cool winds and still, calm water- it woke and demanded to be felt. When he cried, it seemed to quiet down a little, but when it was over, George could tell crying was not what it really took to rid himself of it.

Some called it an inherent sadness, anguish with no direction. He called it a gentle monster.

*“And you smell so sweet
Like fresh-picked daisies
Call me Dahmer ‘cause, your heart’s so tasty”*

George put his face in his arms. His heart swelled and constricted, and he wanted to pull at his own hair. Niki needed to sing to them more often. His finger drew little stars on the ground, etched little smiles onto their faces. That’s when he felt movement beside him, the crunching of sand, the heaviness of a body slipping beside his own.

He looked up, and his cheeks were full of heat again. Dream’s knee brushed against his shin as he sat cross-legged beside George, messing up the small, sandy stars.

“What are you-”

“He wanted to see Karl,” Dream spoke. “Now shh,”

Niki smiled at the newcomers, never ceasing to sing. George watched as Karl sat between Nick’s legs, his back pressed to the Slytherin’s chest as they held each other close. They were so happy together, it was contagious.

*“And I watched you break, like glass you shatter
Said it’s my mistake, I make things harder”*

Dream looked at George, pinching his elbow to get his attention, smiling his goofiest smile when he did, having successfully irritated him. He couldn’t look away from the coat of scarlet on George’s skin or how he wouldn’t look at Dream till he absolutely had to.

*“Now my bedsheets smell like your cologne
And in our separate worlds we sleep alone,”*

George thought of the Slytherin cloak resting in his lower drawer and all of a sudden drowning himself in the lake before them seemed like a beautiful idea. He wondered what Dream was thinking about. He hoped it was not this.

Niki finished the song and the group broke out into applause. She deserved that and so much more. George could only dream of being that talented, but in this lifetime, he knew he had to do without it.

Dream said something about her voice suiting the song, he said he had heard it. George watched his eyes light up when Niki introduced him to some more muggle music, asked him to try some artists, listen to some albums. He ended up penning it down on parchment, a neat list of everything he needed to check out. She played to him little bits of some others that she liked and he couldn’t get enough of the excitement bubbling in Dream’s features, how his eyes stayed wide open, a subtle smile playing on his lips, as he nodded his head every now and then.

“I never thought you’d be friends with such cool people,” Dream said when everyone had left, and they needed to leave soon too lest they should miss a class.

“Of course I’m friends with cool people,” George replied. “You’re the one with mundane *Quidditch* this, *Quidditch* that friends,”

Dream playfully shoved him, and George couldn’t stop the easy laugh he and Dream fell into.

“They’re not all like that,”

They seemed to be the only ones left on the shore. Everyone else had long gone. George did not want to, he wanted to sit by the lake, dip his fingers in the cold water, staring out into the unlimited space. Perhaps he would play some muggle music too.

Dream watched as the wind ruffled George’s hair, the dark strands shadowing his forehead, falling into his eyes. When George lifted a hand to get them out of the way, he left a trail of glitter on his face, by the corner of his eye, like a beautiful tear. He looked away, it was too much.

“What’s on your hands?” He asked when the silence grew thicker.

George splayed his palms out before him, flexing his fingers before muttering, “Unicorn blood,”

Dream rolled his eyes, and before he knew it, pale hands grabbed his own, smearing the glitter all over his skin.

“George, stop!”

But of course, he didn’t. Dream was surprised at how tight his grip could be and how it definitely wasn’t easy to free himself. But when he really tried, he turned the tables around, and before they could count to three, their hands were intertwined, fingers sliding between each other’s, glimmering under the slanting sun.

The laughter died down, as all they were left with was them clutching tight onto each other. They should let go, George’s cold palms were not supposed to find comfort in Dream’s warmer ones. He caught how Dream looked at him, green irises searching his face, he should have looked away, he should have pulled his hands out of their lock with Dream’s.

Instead, he found his weakness returning, creeping up on him like ivy over trunks. He did not know when he had stepped closer or had Dream moved? Time, movement, distance, nothing made sense to him. It seemed futile, why did we need to keep track of it anyway?

“Will you kiss me again?” George asked, the question he had been thinking of since last night, finally melting into words.

“Do you want me to?”

George paused. He knew he had treaded on those lands again that left him parched, in dire need of something, he was afraid to place a finger on what exactly. His fingers felt light, insignificant in Dream’s.

“I don’t know what I want anymore,” George confessed. “What do you want?”

Dream had never seemed so sharp before, every curve and edge of him more prominent and George waited, slightly open-mouthed for a mean comment, something to sting him and for it to all end badly. Because this was Dream here, it had always been sour with him, he had never known sweetness in this realm till he got a taste last night.

And now, he was trying to stifle the urge for it to happen just a single time more. Maybe he would realize then that this was not what he wanted. After all, the night twisted so many things. In broad daylight, it must be easier to discern between insanity and a passing need of the moment, fleeting flashes of lust, mistakes. Right?

“You don’t want to know that,” Dream spoke, him finally making the move to slip his hands out of

George's, their lingering warmth quickly evaporating from the latter's skin.

"Let's go," Dream said. "Or we have detention waiting,"

Chapter End Notes

hello! how have you been? thank you so much for reading and giving this work so much love. I'm honestly so happy to have you here <3

Dream's recent photos have me on the floor sobbing T_T /pos

(please listen to coffee breath if you haven't already T_T)

clockwork

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dream had always found it hard to believe in miracles. For the masses, things that they couldn't explain were scary, sometimes beautiful, but for him, if it could not be calculated and predicted, then there was a pattern yet to be found with the phenomenon. There was an equation yet to emerge. Things can always be measured, expressed as bar graphs and line charts, given a unit.

For years, he had worked so hard on himself, tried to identify how he feels when faced with certain things, how to minimize pain, how to avoid it. How had he gotten it so completely wrong this time?

He had always thought that it was funny to annoy George, he had thought that it brought him amusement to see the latter irritated. He had thought he felt joy in knowing that he could get George to react more than anyone else in the room.

His world came crashing down when he began to realize how it was not an annoyed George that made all the hustle worth it, but his little scrunched up nose, his knitted, dark brows and how his skin turned pink as Camellia flowers. Joy was not when George reacted to him, but when he had his undivided attention, when he was the one George chose to put his energy into.

To say that it didn't bother him to see George at the Lake the other day, smiling and having a pleasant time with people who were not him, would be a fine, silk-coated lie. From experience, he knew not to brush off that little sting in the chest, the sudden tightening of his jaw, the heavy gulp down his throat.

He was the sole witness of how he had held himself back when George had looked up at him in that unblinking stare that could pull down the highest of walls, and asked him that damned question.

Will you kiss me again?

And he had wanted to say *I will* and *till the sun goes down again*, but who was he to tell George that? And how was he supposed to ask George the same when all they had ever had between them was banters and vastly different opinions and not a light of vulnerability, until recently?

Never in a million years would he have thought that he'd get to hold George, and when he did, he did not want his arms to be full of anything else. It had been foreign, and he had needed time to process it, he still wasn't sure if he remembered exactly how it was. But he would gladly do it all over again, if only George would let him.

And so he fished out a crumpled piece of parchment from his pocket, one that George had thrown at him in class weeks ago.

'I will stupefy your entire family' it said, and Dream smiled, despite himself.

He did not know when he had started hoarding these little bits of parchment, ones with George's clear hand, his biting, clever words. He loved the sting of it. And when he had noticed that George used separate sheets for rough calculations, and sometimes would absently doodle in the margins, he had wanted to keep those too.

He shook his head at how walking to the Astronomy room every night had seemed like a burden at the beginning of the year, and now, as he walked down the barely-lit hallways, he could feel nothing but a funny warmth in his chest. It wasn't easy after a tiring day of classes to still do some more work at night, and no matter what, he would never admit out loud that George made it easier sometimes. Only sometimes.

"Clay!"

Dream turned around with a jerk at the sound of the Headmistress's voice. Professor McGonagall looked like she never aged a day since the days of the Hogwarts War. She still looked like her portraits from all that time ago. If anything, the addition of her ever-present snowy owl that rested on her shoulder, sneering down on everyone it looked at, made her seem more intimidating than she really was.

"Professor,"

"Where are you off to?"

"To the Astronomy Tower," Dream spoke. "I have Divination duty,"

She waved a dismissive hand before her.

"You are not going there tonight," She said. "Follow me to my office."

*

Dream had always found the eerie, skeptical portraits of the Headmasters, found doing questionable things sometimes, to be an unnecessary addition to the otherwise spectacular office. Professor Snape, sitting in his high chair in the frame regarded him as coldly as ever, only this time, he found his thin lips mouthing something at him.

Run away.

He swallowed thickly. The room felt much colder all of a sudden, he felt the chill seeping into his flesh and wrapping around his bones. It was not until he saw a blue-robed figure, sitting in one of the visitors' seats, brown hair falling over her slim yet powerful shoulders, that he *really* felt sick.

Hermione Granger.

Minister for Magic.

Her delicate, decided eyes fixed him with a calculated stare as he stopped in his tracks and let McGonagall walk to her own high chair. He squared his shoulders, tried to appear bigger than he really was, in pathetic hopes to not let them show how absolutely he did not want to be here.

Had she come because they had found illegal potions with a member of his Quidditch team a few weeks ago? Would she hold him accountable for it too, because he was the captain and therefore shared responsibility? But that had been taken care of, the other player was serving detention for it, almost on the verge of being expelled. Also, the matter wasn't huge enough for the Minister for Magic to step in.

"Have a seat," She spoke, and his suspicions tightened.

He walked, slow and careful, to the seat by the silver pensieve, gingerly resting his hands on the cold, wooden armrests.

The Minister had a handful of papers in her hands that she kept fiddling with, finally placing them on the table and sliding them toward him. He picked them up and pulled at the little string that bound them together.

“These are your score cards,” She said. “From all of your time at Hogwarts.”

Dream flipped through them all, and sure enough, it was exactly what she said it was. He smiled at the one from his first year, seeing his first ‘A’ at Flying that he had been so euphoric about.

“They’re quite like my own,” The Minister added. “But you’re so much better at Defense than I ever was, like Harry,”

“Thank you,”

He looked over to Snape’s portrait again, only to find him coldly shaking his head.

Leave, he mouthed again, and Dream averted his gaze.

“I see Severus has taken a liking to you,” McGonagall spoke. “Don’t pay mind to him.”

Dream had no clue as to where this was going. He knew that his scores were definitely not the reason why he was here. It was strange that the Minister of all people should have it, or be interested in it.

“I’ll jump straight to the matter, Clay,” The Minister said. “There’s a potential Death Eater that escaped Azkaban last night, and we are short on Aurors to hunt him down.”

“That’s awful,”

“The Ministry, therefore, will be recruiting a team of the most competent students at Hogwarts, preferably seventh years like yourself, to assist the Aurors in this quest. We will mostly be needing you for all the minor tasks, nothing all that heavy, and you will never be without help.”

Dream’s head worked like complex clockwork machinery, this was too huge to consider, too sudden for a mundane night like this.

“All the work that you do with us will be the equivalent of extra points to be added to your NEWTs results, *and* you earn a letter of recommendation from us for whatever institution you would like to go to next. We’d even finance it for you,”

“Okay-”

“It still might be dangerous so you have the choice to refuse my offer,” The Minister spoke. “But I would love it if you joined us in this. Judging by your records, you seem brilliant.”

Dream did not know whether he should thank her or not. He regretted not listening to Snape. He should have run away. He should have left. He took in a deep, long breath, the cogs in his head turning rapidly, making him dizzy.

“What about my parents?” He asked. “Have you spoken to them about this?”

“I have, and yours are rather excited about you taking this up,” McGonagall said. “One of the Aurors you will be working with happens to be good friends with your father.”

Dream still wasn’t sure if he wanted to accept the offer right away. He was all for a good adventure, but this time, the *one time* when he really felt like staying at Hogwarts more than ever,

he was being encouraged to stay away from it for a length of time. Nobody knows how long the search would last, and his gut prodded at him, saying that it was going to be a lengthy one.

“Who else would be on the team with me?”

“We have to decide that still, but probably just one other person.” The Minister answered. “Can’t have too many kids involved.”

Dream clasped his palms together, his jaw clenched tight. He looked back up at Snape, but he was not there anymore. The frame hung empty, and dark on the wall.

“Take the night off,” McGonagall spoke when he didn’t. “Let me know what you decide in the morning.”

He was more than glad for the chance to leave the room, and when he did, he found himself unable to return to his dorm. He knew sleep wouldn’t easily take his hand and lead him into a dreamland this time. It was going to be so much tougher than that.

Chapter End Notes

hello! how's everyone doing?

this week has been such a crazy one- dream's birthday, more karlnap stuff, MCC team announcements, GEORGE'S TIKTOK *internal screaming*

please let me know how you liked this chapter in the comments! love you tons <3

twitter: IcedTales

think

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George snuffed out the candles on his table, watching the trail of smoke the once burning flame had left behind. Usually, he loved peace. He loved being able to work like this, having the space to himself. Tonight he did not.

He had worked on his transcriptions for close to an hour, and he felt he was too undisturbed, as though the room lacked something. Everything was not as it should be, and that made his chest heavy with unease.

Professor Phil read something silently behind him, his half-moon spectacles perched atop his nose in that grim fashion which made him look older than he really was.

"I'm done," George announced, collecting his wand from the table and pushing his chair back in.

The man looked up with a jerk, he looked woken from a dream. George felt bad about the interruption, but it had to be made. He could not bear to sit there another moment.

"Thank you, George," He spoke low, in a nearly sleepy voice. "Go back straight to your dorm, yeah?"

George only nodded, not knowing where else the Professor expected him to go at this hour. He wandered out into the stony, cold hallways. Sometimes, it hit him like a brick how near the end he was, how after just a little bit of time, he would never get to walk down these corridors again, not in his house robes. Soon, he would be a mere visitor in this place he called home. He would leave Hogwarts, would Hogwarts ever leave him?

He did not think so. A part of him would die with it, buried in this castle till time existed. It would not be talked about, no one would know. Only he would be aware of its whisperings, he was the one who would have to deal with not being here anymore. He did not know if he would ever find another home.

Hogwarts made him, there would never be a substitute to it. Nothing would ever even come close.

He paused as he saw familiar light hair in the distance, a robed build that he recognized. His heart did its funny thing again, speeding up at every little moment and George breathed deeply before calling out to him.

"Dream?"

He did not turn to him, he did not answer. All he did was start walking away wordless and cold.

"Have I done something wrong?" George asked. "Did I say too much? Is that why you didn't come for Astronomy?"

And Dream finally stopped, he turned around gingerly, taking slow, measured steps toward George. The silence that hung between them was thick with unspoken words, things that should be said and others that shouldn't.

"I think I did, I asked you to stop me if I cross a li-"

Dream put an urgent, soft finger to his lips, and George's eyes widened into pools of shock. The observatory, the moonless night, his foggy head, and questionable decisions came spiraling back to him. Dream was close to him again, but of course, never close enough. His hands itched to grab the front of his robes, to pull at his tie, to make all of his mistakes all over again.

"If you missed me so much, you should have ditched it as well,"

"I didn't... I didn't miss you," George spoke. "What are you talking about?"

"Sure,"

Dream's mouth grew into a smirk and George knew he wasn't buying it in the least. He felt the finger on his mouth slip away, the silence turning into so much more than just a mere absence of words.

"Why weren't you at duty?" George asked, anything to escape the tension and the heat that made him do things he wouldn't in his sane moments.

Dream huffed out a breath and dragged a hand through his hair. His eyes didn't meet George's, he was still so distant.

"Everyone- my family included, wants me to go on this... on this stupid *quest*." Dream spoke. "McGonagall had pulled me aside to talk about it."

George's eyes narrowed and he folded his arms over his chest.

"Quest?"

For the minutes that followed, George heard about the happenings of the Headmistress's chamber that night- how the *Minister* herself wanted Dream to go, how it would be so glorious for him despite being a little dangerous.

"And you don't want to go?" George asked.

"Why would I?" Dream replied. "I want to be here,"

"*Why?* What do you have here that's greater than what the quest can give you?"

Dream opened his mouth to say something but realized that he really had no answer to this one. He just wanted to be here, maybe it was because he was finally happy, finally looking forward to things in the day. But was that an excuse good enough to stay?

"You want me to go?" He asked, voice small, staring out into the dark of the night through the large window.

"They don't ask everyone to do it, Dream," George spoke. "They believe you're good enough, better than anyone else in this castle."

Something inside of Dream threatened to crack, it knocked at his tongue to say something, and so he did.

"What about you?" He asked. "Do *you* want me to go?"

George paused too long for someone who wanted to say yes. Dream did not miss it, the hesitation did not pass him by.

“My wishes are not worth anything, Dream.” George spoke. “This is too good an opportunity to pass up.”

George had never looked at him like this. He had never seen more desperation on his face, not even on the night they kissed. With a startling, breaking realization, he folded his arms before him.

“If you just don’t want to see me, if you hate me so much, it’s okay,” Dream said. “You can say it. I’ll be out.”

He saw George’s eyes go wide, and all of a sudden slim, marble-like hands were clutching the front of his robes tightly.

“You know what? I fucking *wish* that was true. I wish I hated you. I wish that I wouldn’t want to see you. I wish I could just... just ignore you and not feel my heart splitting into two.” George spoke, his eyes glistening with the pain collected over god knows how many nights.

“I *think* you should go because you’re worthy and they need you and you can save so many people by locking that Death Eater back into Azkaban,” George said. “But I *want* you to be here, goofing around in Astronomy, flying around in the Quidditch field, blowing up Potions but blaming it on your partner, and sometimes... sometimes logic must take precedence over feeling. Careful thought must weigh more than some silly things you *wish* should happen. And... and I *think* you should go.”

Dream’s hands fell from in front of him and slipped around George’s waist, silently pulling him in, filling his arms with the one thing they had craved since that night. He kissed the top of his brown, fluffy head and George slid his arms around his neck, pressing himself into Dream so tightly he could barely breathe.

“What else do you *think* I should do?” Dream teased and an easy chuckle escaped George, catching somewhere in the fabric of Dream’s robes. He smelled citrus and like scented candle wax tonight. Dream could get used to it.

George looked up, his dark eyes pooling with mischief, as he brought a finger to the side of Dream’s face and traced his hard jaw.

“I think...” George said. “Fuck it. I can’t think when you’re like this,”

“Like what?”

“Like... like when you speak to me like this, as if no one else is meant to hear you talk so low, so soft. Like you save all of it for me, I know you don’t but... it just feels like that.”

Dream smiled, leaning into George, putting his lips right next to his ear.

“Who told you that I don’t?” He whispered and George felt his head lighten in that dangerous way again, he had already spoken way too much. He had hoped to have some power over what he did at least, but if Dream was going to be saying things like that, it was going to be an aborted mission, a forgotten, fragile promise he had made to himself.

“Really?”

Dream dragged his fingernails down George’s side, their lips barely at any distance from each other as he whispered a soft ‘*really*’. He found it beautiful how George just melted into him, how touching him felt like returning back to a long-lost sweet memory turned silver with age, as if he had done this in another world, in another lifetime.

“You know what I think?” Dream asked.

“What?”

“I think I’ll sleep much better if you kissed me.”

George smiled, and Dream expected the familiar sweet lips to be pressed up against his own, but instead, he found them at the corner of his mouth, brushing past where he wanted them.

“That’s what you get for leaving me hanging the other day,” George spoke, disentangling his arms from him. “Good night, Dream.”

And he walked away, chuckling when he heard Dream crying out in frustration behind him. He supposed the Head Boy could deal with a little bit of that tonight.

Chapter End Notes

hello, we're another chapter down. i'm sorry i could not make it as long as i wanted to, things have been a bit all over the place for me these days. but do let me know what you think in the comments and please take good care of yourselves :)

thank you for being here, your presence makes my day so much better <3
twitter: @IcedTales

shame

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

It had been so much easier for George to ask Dream to leave. It had been a matter of seconds and the words were out, but now that he lay awake with a sting in his chest on his dormitory bed, did he realize how much tougher than that it was going to be. Everything had become a yellow cloud of confusion ever since kissing him.

He tossed and turned in his sheets, thinking only of swirling, green irises, a head of honeyed hair, and strong arms whenever he closed his eyes. He would rather stay awake. Everything annoyed him and nothing he could tell himself would rationalize the illegal sense of *possession* that he found hard to shake.

The few hours in the Tower without Dream had felt like what Astronomy duty would have been like for him a year ago, only worse. This time he not only missed the physical presence of somebody alongside him in the cold but also desperately clawed for it. He wondered if he could fix that problem by asking for another partner till Dream returned, he hoped it would work.

The slow tears that streamed down the sides of his face and onto the hard pillow begged to differ with him though, but he was not going to give in to them tonight. He had had enough of letting his sentimental self take the lead and it had always given him the best feeling momentarily, but mountainous regret later.

He swallowed hard the lump in his throat but it formed back again as if George had no business telling it to go away. A choked sob left his lips before he could stop it and he put his hands over his face. He did not want to cry like this, not over something he did not even know how to speak out loud. He heard the paper-thin curtains to his bed that barely provided an illusion of privacy slide, and his hands jerked away from himself.

Karl slipped in beside him, pulling the covers over them both, drawing George close for an embrace he did not know he had needed.

“Why are you sad?”

Delicate but cold fingers wiped his face before he hid himself into Karl’s shoulder, clinging onto him for life and for sanity. A myriad of things came to him like a whirling tornado and all he could do was try not to weep so hard that he woke the entire dorm up.

“I don’t know,” George spoke. “I shouldn’t be sad but... but I am.”

“Is it your grades again?”

“No, they’re fine,”

In silence, Karl held him, stroked the dark curls of his hair till he felt his eyes beginning to droop, almost as if his lids were being coated with a layer of lead for every minute that he kept them open. He did not want to sleep, he knew the world his head would abandon him in- one filled with a silken voice saying every syllable of his name in a way that made his heart race and forced him to suck in a breath, where all that was green was beautiful and soft lips kissed him in tender places.

His dreams were vivid and they were terrible. They made him want to grab a fistful of his sheets

and scream out into the void like there was no tomorrow.

“I’m sorry I woke you up,”

“It’s okay. I couldn’t sleep either,” Karl spoke.

George wanted to ask why, but he didn’t think he had it in him to deflect from his own fragile state anymore. He made a mental note to ask Karl about it later, he hoped he remembered it.

“Is it Dream?” He added after a few careful moments.

George’s jaw tightened upon his mention, amazed at how Karl somehow always knew what was up without even being told. He swore this boy had a gift the world was not ready for.

“I don’t know,” George muffled his words into the sleeve of Karl’s shirt.

“Did he hurt you?” Karl asked. “I swear I’ll fight him, I don’t care what Nick says.”

George put a hand on his best friend’s chest, silently asking for calm. He was not sure how to tell him that it wasn’t Dream who had hurt him. It was himself and that there was nothing anyone could do about it.

Gingerly, he allowed himself space, taking in a deep, cold breath. His thoughts still made no sense to him but Karl listened, patient and sympathetic as he poured out the contents of the night, how Dream would go away at some point and how they had almost kissed again.

He found Karl sighing in response, his eyes staring at the empty, dark ceiling in contemplation. George tugged at the warm fabric of his jumper, demanding an answer, for him to say something, to tell him that he wasn’t crazy.

“Get out of this... this state of denial, George,” Karl said. “It’s only hurting you.”

“What are you talking about?”

“Come on, please stop telling yourself that you don’t feel something for him when you clearly do,”

“I do no-”

“Shut up.”

George ground his teeth together so tightly it was almost painful. This was not the conversation he had hoped to have. What did it matter if he felt something for Dream or not? He just wanted an out from this and it seemed nowhere in sight presently.

“What do I do now?” He asked, knowing there was no point in trying to correct Karl again.

“There isn’t much to do. At least nothing that I can see,” Karl spoke. “Unless you want to tag along with him because no way in any world is he *not* going.”

George’s brows knitted in doubt as he considered the possibility that had just been thrown at him.

“Why would they... why would they go for me?”

“Why wouldn’t they?” Karl asked. “You’re smart, you have potential, you’re sincere.... I can’t imagine what else they might need.”

Silence settled cool and light between them as George took his time accepting the little words of praise from Karl. He did not know what to say, what to think. All he wanted was sweet sleep to wind itself around him and lull him into unconsciousness.

“I just want to stop feeling this way,”

“Then you need to stop pretending that Dream leaving does not bother you,”

“Karl,” George spoke with finality in his nearly shaky voice. “You’re just saying this because you ship us.”

For a while, there were no words exchanged and George was beginning to wonder if he had fallen asleep. As he was about to look up and make sure of that, the other one broke the ice.

“You know what?” Karl said. “I’ll be here for you with a shack full of tissues when you realize I’m right.”

And George felt warmth leave his side as Karl let go of him and slipped out of his bed to finally sleep on his own.

*

The Charms class was hardly ever this quiet. Only Flitwick giving out a particularly difficult quiz set lead to this once-in-a-trillion years phenomenon happening early.

George sighed as he ticked off the last answer, feeling strangely confident about his inputs after a long time. Raising his hand, he let the short man know that he was done and in a blink, his answer sheet flew out from his table to the one at the head of the room.

“George?” He heard Dream call from the seat right behind his. He was so engrossed in the test that he never knew he had been sitting there all this while.

“What?”

“You suck.”

George cracked a smile, partly glad that Dream couldn’t see him.

“Well, you’re affectionate today.”

All at once, there were light fingers ghosting over the back of his neck and the goosebumps were never shy in making an appearance, not when it came to Dream.

He heard the other’s seat being dragged closer to his own, the little desk pressing into the wooden back of his chair.

“Last night wasn’t cool,”

The words were whispered nearly against his ear and he straightened his back, pulling his chair as far away from Dream as the little space between him and the person in front would allow.

“This is a classroom, Dream,” George spoke, alarm evident in his tone. “We can’t... this is not where you should bring that up.”

“Oh yeah?” He challenged, pulling his chair closer a second time. George had nowhere to shift now. This was where they were stuck. “I will, what are you gonna do about it?”

He felt warm fingers press into the curves of his neck, right where they gave way to his shoulders. Dream's hands closed around them and with a short, powerful move, he pulled George closer.

His eyes closed of his own accord, and he could already feel control slipping out from him. There was little he could do here except hope that nobody saw them because Dream sure as all hells wasn't backing off.

"I won't but Flitwick will," George spoke. "You don't want detention with him."

"Why would he detain us?"

His velvet-coated voice was so close to him, his breath warm over George's skin. He could almost feel the scandalous lips on him.

"Don't ask the obvious. I thought you were smarter than that, Dream."

"I'd show you exactly how smart I can be when--"

Dream began but was interrupted by the sound of Flitwick's footfalls as he walked over to a student a few seats to their right.

"When?" George asked when the Professor began walking away.

"Is there a problem, Davidson?"

They jerked apart as the tiny man in his elaborate suit and mustache turned around, his glasses nearly sliding off of his nose.

"No, sir," George spoke. "I just dropped my quill by his seat."

If the Professor suspected something, he didn't say it and left them to themselves, which George was more than abundantly thankful for.

"You have no shame making such terribly awful excuses, George," Dream teased.

"Just like you have no shame feeling me up in class,"

He turned his face to the side to look back at Dream, immense satisfaction branching out in his chest when he found the other struggle to respond but all he could manage was a flustered, little laugh.

Chapter End Notes

hiii :) i am back after a long ass week, feeling a lot, lot better. thank you for being here and giving this work your time <3
i hope you've all been well and please don't forget to let me know what you think about the chapter in the comments :P
thank you!
twitter: @IcedTales

butterfly

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

As soon as he was done with his classes for the day, George made a detour from his usual path to the dorms. He did not want to go back just yet to his mundane homework, mundane waiting cups that he'd fill with sweet tea, and mundane life. He felt a light buzz beneath his skin, coursing through his blood.

It wasn't until he saw the Headmistress turning into the hallway that he almost doubled back and walked the other way, but the hint of an idea, a burning question still too young to be phrased into words made him halt in his steps and call out, "Professor?"

Her swift, powerful gait came to a pause- he was almost surprised that she stopped for him. Up until now, he hadn't been sure if he really wanted to consider what Karl had said last night, but given how he did not know when Dream might leave, and the fact that he had just made McGonagall of all people stay and talk to him, pushed him into nervously asking if there was still a spot on the Ministry's quest that he could take up.

McGonagall's brows furrowed in confusion and he was almost afraid that she would walk away without giving him an answer.

"How do you know about that?"

"I, um- Dream is my..." George hesitated. "He's my..."

"Dream?" She questioned.

"Clay... I meant. That's just a nickname he makes everyone call him by."

"So he told you."

"Yeah."

His heart felt like a hummingbird inside his chest, beating so fast he could barely handle it. Her face was still as a stone effigy's and he had no idea if he had just gotten Dream into trouble by telling her that. He hoped not.

"Well," She began. "You're brilliant George, but we have already signed Soot up for it."

His face fell immediately, losing any luster it had in the first place. He felt a hollow, sinking feeling take over his chest and his gut and he did not know if he could speak further. He was too late, he should have known it. If they wanted him, they would have asked him as soon as the opportunity presented itself. Why would they wait a single second longer when there was a potential Death-Eater in question and only God knew how many lives?

McGonagall must have noticed the shift so she kept a firm hand on his shoulder, giving it a little shake.

"Whenever we have another quest you could join, I would bring it to your notice." She consoled, and before he could tell her that it was okay and that he wasn't taking it personally upon himself, she gave him a curt smile and hurried off, forever busy and having somewhere to go.

All that he was left with in the wake of this rejection was a panicked sense of doubt and a heart with thin crevices that threatened to grow bigger with every second. Dread settled in dark pools within him, filling him up to the brim, leaving no room for anything else.

He would be back in a few days, right? It was not supposed to bother him that much, but something inside of him screamed at him to stop Dream, to not let him go. Something made his guts twist and constricted his throat upon the thought of having Dream so close to someone so dangerous. He was still just a student after all - inexperienced and spontaneous. Things could take any odd, unpleasant turn for all anyone knew.

He shook his head, drawing out a long, exhausted sigh in hopes to stop the train of pointless thoughts. Dream was going to be just fine. This was not the first time that a Hogwarts student had been assigned Ministry business and nor would it be the last. He was going along with a team of the best Aurors out there to add on to it.

And he was so brilliant and strong and swift himself, how could George ever forget that even if he would never say it out loud for the life of him?

He took in the subdued golden glow that the torches on the walls gave off, and finally made his way out of the dreary hallway, toward the library. He knew that when nothing worked to ease his mind, a good old book with tales about elves dancing in circles and green leprechauns with mischievous smiles would.

*

He stupidly lost track of time with the books and now ran late by about half an hour for his duty. As he stumbled into the classroom, his breathing heavy from all the ungodly cardio he had just had to do, he was relieved when he did not spot the Professor in his usual seat.

“Look who decided to show up!”

A taunt, wrapped in mischievous, satin tones was thrown his way from somewhere in the room and it wasn't long till he found Dream by one of the windows at the back. He hated how Dream always lit so few candles and so he filled the room with light, setting ablaze every wick of wax candles that he passed.

“What do we need to do today?”

At this point, he was more than an expert at dodging pointy remarks and sharp taunts, making them fall flat long. He drew his cloak closer to himself as a chill gust of wind flew in, sending a shiver up his skin.

“I've mostly taken care of it all. You can clean up the mess though,”

He scrunched up his nose, but he knew he was in no position to complain. He was the one who had been late after all and so he turned to the table where Dream had apparently been working and carefully made to clean the delicate equipment.

“Wait, I was... I was kidding.”

“No, it's fine I can-”

“*George.*”

And he stilled, because how could he not when his name was uttered with such power, making it

come alive, seem more than just a name for just another person? His hands, light and a bit shaky found home in his pockets, and he did not know whether he should even be here now.

Staying meant he would sneak glances at Dream's face, flush with color and adorned with freckles like sea shells on a sandbank. He would, at some point, look into his eyes and not know the way out. He would wish to crawl back to his warmth and say things he never should and ask a zillion questions he wasn't meant to ask, because who was he?

Who was he to care about all of that?

He felt Dream drawing closer- warm, ghostly touches from familiar fingertips on his jaw, finally closing around his face and tipping it up.

There it was, the green abyss, the all-consuming charm of it all, the pupils wide but not entirely blown. The searching gaze was on him again, so intense and unfathomably warm, pinning him to his place. He could not move even if he wanted to. Maybe that was the problem- he never wanted to move, not when Dream was so close and he let George melt into him and he was careful and waiting. George did not want him to be careful, he did not want him waiting.

"I'm leaving tomorrow," Dream spoke, barely above a whisper. "In the evening most probably."

And here it came, the answer to one of the questions that had been burning away his insides, and now that it had been answered, he wasn't sure if he'd rather stay in confusion than know how long it was till he lost Dream for who knew how many days.

The backs of his eyes stung, just like they always did when his body demanded an emotional release, when things got too heavy and too much.

"How... how long will you be gone?"

His voice sounded so small, so profoundly *timid* that he surprised even himself. He knew that Dream did not know when he'd be back, he knew that nobody did, but he still needed to hear it from Dream, as if everything he said held so much more meaning than anything George could tell himself.

"If you miss me enough, I might come back sooner."

Dream smiled that easy smile, something that came as naturally to him as burning bright came to the Pole Star. Had times been different, he would have smiled too, but tonight- it was too much effort. He knew that he was being teased, that Dream did not *actually* expect George to miss him.

"George?"

"What have you done to me?" George asked, any hesitation slipping out from him like cold water through stony cracks. "I don't think I could set my mind to anything once you're gone."

He watched Dream's lips part, his eyes growing wide as his hands nearly slipped from where they held George's face.

"That's what you wanted to hear, didn't you?"

His hands moved to grab fistfuls of the front of Dream's robes, tugging them towards him, but it wasn't enough to get the blond to move any closer, no matter how desperately he wanted it. He finally gave in and pulled George into himself, his lean frame flush against him as slim arms wrapped around Dream's waist.

"I wanted you to mean it too," Dream spoke into his ear, so low and sweet that George felt his heart fold in on itself.

His arms tightened around Dream, his eyes closing shut as he took in the familiar parchment and woody smell, basking in the warmth he was surrounded by. This was what being too close to the sun must feel like.

He felt a kiss being pressed to his temple, light as a butterfly, but it was there and it was real. He knew he wasn't imagining it and he melted into the tenderness of it all. The fact that he wouldn't have *this* tomorrow, there would be no Dream with him here, cracked open the last of his control, brought down what little of his walls remained and he pulled back from Dream's embrace.

Before he could think about it for another second and chicken out, he leaned up, and for the first time, he kissed Dream all on his own. There were no longing stares this time, no words of pleading, George allowed himself to take what he wanted. He allowed himself the softness of the other's lips against his own, the surprised initial stillness from him, but it wasn't long before he felt Dream melting into him too. Urgent hands held him tight, almost too tight and George's flesh sang in sweet pain where Dream's fingers pressed into him.

"Do you think I mean it now?" He asked when they parted for breath, and Dream nodded, his entire face glowing a soft pink.

It wasn't long before a hand reached into the dark tufts of his hair, pulling at them in the sweetest of ways, making his head fall back into it in a way that was far from innocent, and a warm mouth left gentle, feathery kisses over the pale column of his throat. He almost whined at the loss of the warm, wet heat when Dream drew back, only to undo his silver and blue tie with swift, nimble hands and push his robes down his shoulders, making them collect in a pool around his feet.

His fingers hesitated at the hem of George's sweater, looking up at him with a clouded stare. He knew he could still turn back, prevent it from becoming something more than it already was. His hands moved to cover Dream's, smaller ones settling over the bigger, broader ones like an umbrella too small to shield one fully from the rain.

"Are you happy about going?" He asked.

"Very," Dream said. "I get to not watch you being stupid for a considerable amount of time."

And George let a smile slip, possibly for the first time that night, and playfully smacked the back of one of Dream's hands. The blond only caught George's fingers in his own intertwining their hands together, their palms resting warm against each other.

"I'll miss a lot of things," Dream confessed.

"Like?"

"Like petting the Hippogriff by the Forbidden Forest, destroying Nick at Defense, flying around the Quidditch field when no one's there."

George subconsciously gave Dream's hands a little squeeze.

"Is that all you'll miss?"

"Do you want me to miss something else too?"

He had come to recognize in all this while when Dream was just mindlessly pulling at his strings,

trying to get him to say something he did not want to. He disentangled himself from the blond and gave his chest a little playful push.

“Fuck you!”

Before he could step aside and move away, he felt strong arms wrap around his torso and suddenly Dream was all too close again, their lips barely apart, until they weren't. Dream captured his mouth in a synchronized, burning kiss, as if he had committed George's lips to memory in only the couple times that they had kissed.

“I'll miss a lot of things,” He said when they parted. “But none as much as you.”

Chapter End Notes

hey, how are you doing? thank you for being here and I'm looking forward to knowing what you think about this in the comments!

is it just me or does someone else feel immensely shaken after Techno's video today too? Like it's all i can think about and my heart aches for him and his family. I hope he gets well super, super soon <3

come say hi to me on twitter @IcedTales! <3

autopilot

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

There isn't much one can do when pain claws at the fragile walls of their heart. Everything enjoyable seems like a chore, everything is too slight- not enough to hold attention. All one can think of is how much it hurts, how much they wished it would go away.

It wasn't fair how everyone could just go about their business, solve sums in Arithmancy without feeling a heavy lump in their throat, or finding their heart sinking down into their body, shrinking as it fell. George pressed his quill hard into the parchment, writing down lines upon lines of meaningless combinations of numbers and letters and god knew what else.

His work was so messy today, cuts and ink splashes littering the surface. He nearly gagged at the sight.

His body felt like it was on autopilot today, he didn't remember *actually* doing things, just that they were done- his hands moving to open textbooks, pass notes, write equations. He felt like he was still stuck in the night before, in how he had pulled at Dream's robes, how their lips had pressed together and he had tasted singular, all-encompassing bliss. All of that was going away today and more. Gone will be the easy smiles, the sweet, biting remarks, the breathtaking conglomeration of freckles, and fond utterances of his name in between stupid giggles.

And all he could do was watch.

He was almost about to glance up and look for Dream when he remembered that he wasn't here today. He had been given the day off to pack, George had been told as much last night. He felt the crevices in his heart grow, wondering how long it was till he had to ask for a leave from the class, only to rush to his dorms or the bathrooms and break down completely.

It wasn't until he heard a familiar, swift tip-tap of heeled shoes that he looked up.

"Professor, do you mind if I borrow Davidson?" McGonagall asked, stopping at the threshold of the classroom.

George's eyes flicked between her and the Arithmancy Professor before the man sent a curt nod his way.

"Thank you," She spoke. "Bring your stuff."

He hated it when this happened, it meant that every other person in the room now abandoned their work specifically to look at him and give him the attention he never demanded. He scooped his things in his arms and hurried out as soon as he could.

McGonagall walked ahead of him as they moved down cold, spacious passages in silence, stopping only when they stood in front of the Headmistress's office. His heartbeat never slowed, dread settling somewhere deep within him. Stepping into the familiar chamber felt like the last thing he should be doing.

"Are you still interested in going for a quest?" She asked, pulling out a stack of papers from her drawers and nearly slamming them on her table.

“I... I might be.”

McGonagall fixed him with a pointed look, before taking a seat and drawing out a sheet from the bundle in front of her.

“The Ministry called in and said that they needed someone for the Forensics team on the quest, and I believe Soot is a bit less than ideal for it. He makes a powerful wizard in combat but all of Hogwarts knows who the master of vials and cauldrons is.” She spoke, pausing to give him a small smile. “Would you be willing to fill in for him?”

George almost thought that he had been dreaming. He pinched the back of his hand under the table just to be sure, silly as it was. There was no way that he was being offered this, that now he was getting to go to wherever it was that they would be taken to.

He felt his sinking heart stop, and now it rose. It rose till it settled giddy and full of life in the middle of his chest, almost threatening to beat out of it.

“Of course the same benefits as Clay shall be availed by you too. All of them.” She added when he hadn’t spoken.

“I... yes. I’d love to go,”

He was smiling so wide he could hardly speak as he gripped the handles of his chair in a white-knuckled grip.

“That’s what I thought. No classes for you today.” The Headmistress said. “Get out now, straight to your dorm. Pack for at least a week. You leave in a few hours.”

He nearly jumped out of his place, thanked McGonagall a million times, and had to try hard not to literally sprint out of the chamber.

Maybe life wasn’t half so bad as he thought it was. He wanted to scream and let every single soul on the campus know that he was going off, that he wouldn’t have to stay here while Dream went away, that he wasn’t so miserable anymore.

The class must’ve ended as he saw a swarm of students pouring out of the classrooms and into the hallways, crowding every last inch of the marble floors. He didn’t realize when Karl neared him and closed his hands around George’s shoulders, making him reach a stop.

“Are you the same person that ruined my tee with tears and snot a couple of nights ago?”

George rolled his eyes, his smile never dulling down. He was sure his face would hurt in a while.

“I don’t have time to explain much but I’ll leave you a note,” George spoke. “I’m being sent away for some days.”

“Why?”

“Hogwarts business.”

And he drifted away from Karl, mixed into the crowd as he tried to reach his cold, empty dorm as quickly as he could.

*

He looked around his space, re-checking if there was anything that he ought to keep but he hadn’t.

He rummaged through his drawers, smoothened out his sheets again and when he was sure that he was good, he fished out the explanatory note to Karl from his pocket and placed it securely on his best friend's desk.

Everything had happened so fast, he felt bad for not being able to tell Karl all of it himself. He knew the other would freak out completely as soon as he read that George was going to be on the quest with Dream and the thought made him crack a smile. He could imagine how Karl's mouth would drop open, his light eyes blazing with excitement.

There was an urgent knock at his door, and he knew that the time had come. This was it. He was leaving Hogwarts for nobody knew how many days, and as he swung the hinged wooden thing open, there stood a couple of house-elves, waiting to take his trunk from him.

A sturdy, black carriage tied to the palest horse George had ever seen stood waiting at the gates, Professor McGonagall and Flitwick standing by it, chatting with whoever was inside. He wondered if Dream had already boarded another carriage and was on his way.

"Oh, here he is!" The Headmistress exclaimed, making the short walk to reach him.

"The consent letter from your mother just arrived. You're good to go," She said, handing him a parchment roll tied with a silken red thread. "Do not lose it. The officials might want to see this one."

George pocketed it with care, a pleasurable bubble of excitement rising high inside of him. He had had plenty of time in his dorm to think about how precious of a feather this quest could prove to be in his cap. He was getting in for a position that he aspired to take up at the ministry someday, how many got to experience their dream job like this before they actually got it?

He felt his fingertips tingle as he grabbed the cold handle to the door and ducked his head to climb in.

"Wilbur, we'll need to switch carriages with the ministry folks about halfway to Hogsmeade," Dream spoke, never looking up from the book he was reading.

"Oh yeah?" George asked. "And what if we don't stop for them?"

The blond head snapped up, eyes wide in surprise, but soon it was there- the smile George sometimes saw in his dreams, forming a curve on Dream's mouth.

"What... what are you-"

"Does this thing heat up?" George interrupted. "I'm way too cold."

totally did not quote Hagrid with the 'Hogwarts business' xD

thank you for being here and reading this work. please let me know what you think in the comments <3

girlfriend

Chapter Summary

tw: mentions of blood

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George couldn't remember the last time he felt his heart being so full that he was afraid it might combust. Dream sat across from him, casually looking like a child of Aphrodite, or perhaps Ares, or maybe both. At some point he had stretched his legs and Dream had nudged them with his shoe, desperately trying to mess up the polish on George's own, until it resulted in a game of playful kicking.

Their laughter filled up the little room in the carriage, mingling with each other. This was maybe how his shins ended up laying warm against Dream's through the fine wool of their uniform pants. It was all George could think about when neither was speaking.

"But really," Dream spoke. "How did they let you in on this?"

"Are you saying that I did not have a chance?"

He earned an eye roll and a light nudge on his leg.

"You're like those girlfriends that take literally everything in the way it wasn't intended,"

It was George's turn to nudge him back, so he did. Their gazes met, vivid greens staring into all-consuming browns. It was almost like a binding spell, unwilling to break.

"Are you also saying that I'm like your *girlfriend*?" George teased.

He watched the pallor on Dream's skin wash away and give way to hues of rose. A shy chuckle escaped his lips, his fingers reaching to rub the back of his neck.

"You're so dumb," He said. "Stop trying to flip the topic!"

"You're the one that called me your *girlfriend*."

"Alright, fuck off. Forget I said anything."

Dream ran a hand through his hair, the sturdy fingers carding through blond locks and George could remember how they had felt between his own slim ones. He hated how he randomly remembered details like that because the inevitable blush that followed was something he never wanted to have to explain.

"They needed someone for Forensics. Wilbur apparently is shit at it so McGonagall took me in." George spoke.

Silence ensued and George began to get faintly worried about having pushed a limit with the

girlfriend quip. He was about to ask when Dream nudged his foot again, shifting this time to trap George's leg between both of his own.

"What are you doing?" George asked, the beginnings of a smile lingering at his lips.

"You'd make a horrible girlfriend."

George chuckled, was this guy really still stuck on that?

"That's mainly because I'd make a much better boyfriend," He responded.

He watched playfulness abandon Dream's face, the carriage felt just a little bit colder. Warm fingers ghosted over the cap of George's bent knee, barely touching it, and if they did, Dream would draw them away just as quickly.

"How would I know that?"

There it was again, the dropped voice that made George's breath hitch, accelerated the beating of his heart, made him want to melt into it so thoroughly that going back to reality wasn't an option any longer.

"You... you wouldn't."

He was painfully aware of the clear, emerald orbs staring right into him, probably seeing more than George wanted them to see. He contemplated looking up from the dark, iron floor of the carriage and meeting his gaze for gaze. He wouldn't want to be seen as a coward and so he decided to rebel against his head, to quit avoiding what formed the substance of his dreams, to look up and memorize for the millionth time just how heavenly a pair of human eyes could be.

"Would I ever know it?"

George felt heat spread in his cheeks, travel down his neck, and wrap his skin in a strawberry tint. Was Dream really asking what he thought he was asking? He touched a hand to the cold hard seat of the carriage, checking to see if this wasn't something his mind was making up in the midst of heavy slumber.

At this point, he was formally incapable of speech, and to add the cherry on top of the cake, Dream's hand finally settled where his knee ended and the supple flesh of his thigh began, pressing his fingers into it lightly.

"Are you asking me if..." George began. "If I'd ever be-"

He could never finish his sentence, as they felt the carriage jolt, almost completely tilting over to the side. George was positive that they'd hit something and before he could say something about it, another bang on the metallic surface followed, like being hit by a rock.

In a flash, Dream opened the door to his side of the carriage, the one that hadn't been hit.

"Jump out!" He yelled. "We've been attacked!"

George hardly had time to comprehend what had been said to him when Dream grabbed his hand and with a strong pull, they were both out of the wheeled iron vehicle, landing on the grassy side of the path.

George groaned out as pain shot up his leg, but Dream continued to pull at him, trying to get him

up so they could hide behind a nearby tree. He half-dragged, half- lifted George to safety, as fatal, blue sparks from unknown wands mercifully missed them. The carriage they had abandoned blew up in a terrifying blaze in the distance and George was close to tears, horror filling up every cell of him.

He tried to get to his feet as Dream threw counterspells in the attackers' direction. He fished for his wand inside his robes, hoping he hadn't dropped it when they jumped out and to his relief, he felt it warm, almost ready inside his pockets.

"*Bombardo!*" He yelled, directing his wand at the trees on the other side of the path, unable to make out if there were any individual figures in the dark.

An explosion followed, the heat of it touching even them from across the wide road and Dream ducked, dropping to sit beside him, his hands over his ears. They waited, still and unmoving, for more attacks to come, for any sounds they could hear. But there was plain silence, nothing stirred, not even the wind.

"Are you crazy?!" Dream whisper-yelled. "That could have fucking killed us!"

"But it did the opposite! We don't know how many of them were there and I don't know about you Dream, but if there were more than three and they got any closer, I don't think we would've stood a chance."

George stared back into his angry gaze with just as much fire. He knew he hadn't been unreasonable and he wasn't about to step down unless Dream could hand him a good enough argument.

"Are you hurt somewhere?" Dream asked.

Suddenly he felt like his leg was on fire, and every ache in his body became intensified. He reached forward to fold the bottom of one of the legs of his pants, wet to the touch, the metallic scent of blood hitting the air.

"Holy fuck that's a lot of blood," Dream exclaimed. "How did you even get it hurt that bad?"

"You're asking me that after you yanked me out of a fucking carriage and dragged me over grass and mud and all its stones?"

"I'm sorry, George," Dream spoke, the gentle pads of his thumbs coming up to wipe the high of his cheeks free from tears. He had hardly realized that he had begun crying. "Let me help you."

He rolled the cloth of his pants up to his knee, examining the wound under the lit tip of his wand.

"You must've grazed it over some pretty sharp stones, rocks... whatever." Dream spoke. "It's a bit deep, but nothing we can't fix. Lay down."

George's brows furrowed together in confusion, but he did as he was told. Dream, gentle as ever, cupped his hands under George's calf and raised it.

"What the fuck are you?"

"We need to have it over the level of your heart, idiot." Dream snapped. "Or the bleeding is never going to stop."

"*Aqua Eructo,*" He whispered under his breath, pointing the tip of his wand over the wound on

George's leg.

He hissed in pain as the cold jet of clear liquid hit his injured skin, tears stinging the backs of his eyes. He hoped to not cry further. Dream conjured up a clean cloth, wiping at the unaffected wet places tenderly, blowing over it ever so often.

"Where do we go after this?" George asked as Dream secured tight bandages around his leg.

"I don't know. The carriage blew up, we are literally in the middle of nowhere, god knows how many miles from Hogwarts or Hogsmeade. You're injured and definitely shouldn't walk for some time. It's dark, there's no sun, I can't tell the direction, there's no--"

"Hey, hey, hey," George spoke. "We're in this together, okay? Panicking won't do either of us any good."

Dream sighed, finishing up the bandages and lowering George's leg to the ground. He slipped in beside George, putting an arm around him.

"You can sleep if you're tired." He said. "We'll maybe continue down this road in the morning."

Chapter End Notes

hello! i hope you're enjoying what you're reading so far. Feel free to let me know what you think about this chapter in the comments <3
this part was a bit intense but hey, you made it out! xD
thank you for being here and giving this work your time! take care and see you tuesday <3

Twitter: @IcedTales

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“You can sleep if you’re tired.” He said. “We’ll maybe continue down this road in the morning.”

There was a sudden rustling of the leaves, a quick stirring of the wind merely a few feet away from them. Before either had time to get their wands out, there appeared a woman, cloaked in green. Her hair was tied up in a neat bun and looked almost like it had been glued there. Dream would have found it comical were he not stuck in the circumstance he was presently in.

“No you won’t,” She said. “You are to come with me.”

Dream was on his feet, about to cast a disarming spell, when she produced a dark card with the Ministry’s logo printed in glimmering golden ink on it and signed beneath was a name, a barely visible picture of the woman moving in its little square. Whatever other details it held, he could not see, thanks to the dark.

“Saskia Phillips, Ministry of Magic.” She spoke, her tone full of unhidden pride, as she gestured Dream to put his wand away.

“Where the hell were you when we were being attacked?!”

George shivered in his place. He had never heard so much anger sewn into a voice before, and like a quivering leaf attached feebly to a twig, he watched as Dream towered over the small woman, his eyes glaring daggers at her.

“Our carriage blew up, George got injured, we could’ve fucking *died*, is this how-”

“He’s a rude one, isn’t he?” She spoke to George. He could only stare in utter astonishment upon how casually she disregarded a raging, six-foot-three wizard accusing her of incompetence.

“*Excuse me?* We could’ve-”

“We were fighting more of them off a couple of miles down this path.” She spoke, her voice collected and poised like still water, but George could tell that if Dream didn’t stop soon, this wouldn’t end well for them. “The two that managed to escape unluckily got to you before we could. It’s not like we just watched while you danced around death.”

The silence that descended then brought with it some of the most uncomfortable seconds of George’s life. He did not know if he ought to speak, if he should stand up for Dream or thank the woman for protecting them from the others. He looked to his companion whose face was still twisted into an angry frown, the fire in his eyes bright and murderous.

“Can we apparate now? We have places to be gentlemen.”

“I... I can’t. I don’t know how to-” George began.

“Don’t worry,” Saskia spoke. “You can do it with me.”

As she reached her hand out to help George up, Dream beat her to it, one of his arms circling around George’s waist, and the other taking his hand, effectively pulling him to his feet.

“He will do it with me,” Dream declared, and George swore he felt the other’s hand tighten just a little bit around him.

“Fine. The High Street, Hogsmeade then.” She spoke. “You’ll meet the others there.”

Saying thus, George heard the leaves rustle again and in a heartbeat, she was gone. He looked up to see Dream staring at the spot where the woman had just stood in, eyes unfocused and head fixed in a faraway world.

“What’re you thinking about?” He asked.

“I don’t like her.”

“I could tell, but it’s just a few days. It’s not like you’re stuck with her for the long run.”

Dream sighed, his hand abandoning George’s slim palm to card through his hair. His hand felt nearly incomplete, something not enough, without Dream’s fingers laced through his own. When had he gotten so used to it? To *him*?

“Have you ever apparated before?” Dream asked.

“Never had the chance to,”

He saw how Dream’s eyes begged him to take that answer back, to make it untrue. Another cold sigh escaped his lips before his hand returned to George’s, holding on tighter this time, and an involuntary flush coated George’s cheeks.

“Just don’t throw up on me when we get there, okay?”

*

George felt like he had just been pulled into every possible direction, and he thought that he would fall down the moment the world started getting steadier. Dream didn’t let him.

Almost instantly his hands held George in place, supporting his slender frame as soon as their feet hit solid ground. All that George could see was hazy and for a moment he was worried if apparating caused one to fuck up their eyesight.

“Are you dizzy?” Dream’s voice had gone soft, nothing similar to the spine-chilling yells from just a few minutes ago.

“I’m dying.”

He could nearly hear the eye roll Dream sent his way, but for once, George did not care. He had long accepted the fact that his physical stamina was nothing like your average guy, and it was not his fault either that he had never apparated before. It wasn’t a mandatory skill and one could live just fine without knowing how to do it.

“Do you feel like you’re going to throwing up?”

“Don’t be my mom.”

The hands holding him loosened up almost to the point of letting go and when George started to stumble, unable to stand still on his own two feet, he knew not to let the retorts flow free just yet.

“I’m sorry! I’m sorry! Don’t... just don’t.”

“Don’t what?”

The grip loosened again.

“Holy shit! Don’t! Don’t let go yet! My head’s spinning really bad and I need to lie down, please.”

George was nearly whining by the end, soft chuckles falling into his ears from beside him as Dream held his almost limp body against himself. It felt strangely comforting, safe after the dramatic hustle of the evening. He knew that as long as he was here, there really was little that could get to him.

“This way!” George heard a familiar, shrill voice and upon turning, there stood Saskia, with two other men, their hats sitting so low on their heads that he could barely see their faces.

He watched Dream’s face contort into a sour expression all over again. Unconsciously, he squeezed the blond’s hand, shifting his gaze from the woman to their interlinked fingers.

“Can you walk?”

“I don’t think I can just yet. I need a bit more time.” George replied.

“We’ll lose them if we don’t move now, and I doubt she’s going to wait for us.”

There was silence for a bit, before George caught the hint of an idea swirling in the jade irises of the other one.

“I’m gonna have to carry-” Dream began.

“No way!”

“George! We’re going to be left behind, look at them! They’re already halfway down the street!”

“We could just tell her I can’t and they’d find a way!”

“Like hell she would!”

“Saskia!” George shouted, making the woman and her companions halt in their tracks and turning around to look at them.

So late at night, even though the streets were empty, they knew the people could hear them and wake from their precious night’s slumber, but did George care at this point? He didn’t think so.

“I’m injured and dizzy!” He shouted. “I can barely walk!”

“We’ll wait for you at the end of the street, by The Green Dragon!” She shouted back. “Take your time!”

His eyes widened at the response, as Dream repeated a string of *‘I told you so!’* and *‘if only you’d listen to me!’* to him. They watched the others walk away from them, the subtle lights from the street lamps illuminating the cold, concrete path.

George knew he was feeling a bit better, but it still hurt to walk or put too much pressure on his leg. He wondered how he’d get through the rest of the quest if the first few hours had been like *this*.

“Alright,” George spoke finally. “Carry me, Dream?”

Chapter End Notes

hey hey hey! thank you for being here and reading! i just wanted to give you an update on my upload schedule.

instead of uploading every Tuesday and Saturday, I'm shifting to uploading only on Tuesdays due to some stuff I'm working through right now. it's nothing bad, I'm just involved in a lot of other projects simultaneously that i need to take care of! but ofc, since it's going to be updated weekly instead of bi-weekly, expect longer chapters! so that's a plus yay <3

please let me know what you think of this chapter in the comments and don't forget to take care of yourself! :)))

twitter: @IcedTales!

electric

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

A bolt of pain shot up his leg like electricity inside of a live wire when Dream's arms scooped him up. He couldn't care to hold back the wince that it brought.

"You have no right to be this heavy," Dream spoke, tightening his hold. "Are you using some spell?"

"Why would I?"

"I don't know, to make my life miserable maybe."

George rolled his eyes, arms going sheepishly around Dream's neck. He had thought that after sleeping with the notorious cloak in his bed for actual months, he would have gotten used to the sweet, crisp scent of Dream's cologne. He had been so wrong.

He wondered how easy it would be to curl into Dream's warm self, to bury his face in the crook of his pale, freckled neck till all he was capable of breathing in was Dream, till every single cell of him lit up with the five-lettered name. He wondered what it would be like to kiss him there, to feel Dream's Adam's apple beneath the press of his lips.

He was now past the point of pretending that he did not want all of that. He was done lying to himself about this. It had been too long, he was tired now and he knew that he simply couldn't escape the butterflies in his gut, as cheesy as it sounded, upon the slightest of mentions of the boy currently holding him.

Almost subconsciously, his finger traced the skin that gave way to Dream's shirt collar, as he walked down the wide, empty street. The soft glow of golden lamps and the half-moon hung high in the sky had no business highlighting every plane and angle of him so prettily. It felt like they lit up just for Dream.

"What are you doing?" Dream spoke, his silken voice low but warm, like glowing embers in a hearth.

George's hand halted, nearly withdrawing from him until he decided against it, letting his touch linger.

"Should I stop?" George asked. "After everything, I thought you'd be okay with this."

The entire time they had been walking, George had felt like something was amiss. It was only now that he realized what it was- the green gaze he had come to be so enchanted by, which sometimes managed to intimidate the fuck out of him, he'd never say that out loud though. Nobody had to know that, especially not Dream.

He had been looking straight ahead as if straying his gaze from the path would be detrimental. He had been so conscious, hyper-vigilant even since they had been attacked and their carriage had exploded.

"We're literally in the middle of a street, George." Dream spoke.

“Oh, you’re worried about that?”

“Isn’t it valid?”

Dream’s tone did not mask his amusement and George knew all too well when he was being teased.

“You literally tried to feel me up in front of a class full of students and a *Professor*,” George said. “So no, it isn’t valid. Not for you.”

Dream’s pace slowed, for a second worrying George that he was going to be abandoned and asked to walk the rest of the way. Today really was not the day for him to let his tongue loose, he should have drilled that into his head by now.

The gentle tip-tap of his shoes against the concrete was nearly soothing and George watched how the light breeze took its time caressing Dream’s hair. He noticed how a little smile danced across his mouth, maybe because the memory of them in that classroom, George’s back pressed to his chair, Dream’s fingers digging into his shoulders, flashed before him.

“I could toss you into the gutter right now,” Dream threatened. “That seems pretty valid to me.”

“Why?”

“You’re literally making me carry you *and* you can’t keep your mouth shut. Do I need more reason?”

“Saskia was right,” George spoke. “You are a rude one.”

They fell into an effortless round of giggles again, it seemed so easy these days. When had constant insults given way to constant fond bickering? When did purposeful harm turn into purposeful protection? When did it all change so vividly but so quietly?

Maybe the answers lay in the way George could tell he loved the strength of Dream’s arms around him, or the way Dream felt a delicious tinge of something unknown inside of his chest when he held George so close, so profoundly near his heart. He wondered if George could feel the powerful, lightening thrum of it through his cloak.

Dream finally glanced down at him, eyes housing fatigue, depth, playfulness, and something more - something warmer that George was too afraid to name, sending electric bolts branching through his chest, all the way down to his gut. He was about to say something again, make another witty remark, just to see if Dream really would put him down, to see how long he let George get away with it when the other one halted completely.

They had reached, he was being lowered.

Even though he was sure he could stand on solid ground now that his head wasn’t spinning anymore, he did not want to let go. Letting go meant being away from the abundant warmth that Dream radiated, like some sort of a personal sun. It meant he wouldn’t get to touch the gentle column of his neck anymore. He didn’t want all of that taken away, at least not so soon.

In a heartbeat, he stood beside the blond instead of being in his arms, his hands cold and folded across his own chest, instead of being wrapped around the other. He had to stifle a scowl.

The Green Dragon looked sketchier by night, George noticed. The inn wasn’t exactly known for the best reasons anyway, what with notorious wizards having stayed in it at multiple points of time,

scheming things that put the magical world to shame. He wondered why Saskia wanted to bring them here instead of all the other places they could have gone to in Hogsmeade.

Almost as if she had read his mind, she spoke, “After the attack, we could not risk being traced any further so we had to cancel all the inn reservations we had made for the team in the name of the Ministry. This, and another small inn down this lane were the only places with vacant rooms. I and the other Aurors involved in the quest would be staying at that one, but we will have to drop you two here.”

“Why?” Dream asked. “Why can’t the entire team just stay together?”

“Because they don’t have enough rooms. It is this or the cold streets for you.”

George looked at Dream, his mouth opening to make a remark that would most likely land them in trouble, and so he intervened.

“It’s fine,” He spoke. “We’ll stay in here.”

He received an unkind, painful pinch on the elbow from his companion and when he looked up, a deep expression of disapproval sat on his features. George knew he had done the right thing. He wasn’t going to give in to Dream this time.

“Perfect. But there’s something else we need to fix.”

“And it is?” Dream questioned.

Saskia simply pointed toward a wooden signboard set neatly by the entrance of the inn, the writing on it barely visible.

*Only COUPLES suites available
10 Galleons a night*

“We’ve paid for it, the only thing you’ll need to do is act like an actual couple around people,” She informed.

There was silence, cold and heavy like the air around them. George looked up at Dream, his eyes equally wide, filled to the brim with doubt and something teetering on the edge of hesitation.

“What... what about our stuff?” Dream asked. “The carriage blew up and we have no luggage to check in with.”

“You don’t need to worry about that,” Saskia said, her voice laced with apparent impatience. “The Ministry took care of it. You’ll get everything you might need, possibly more, by tomorrow morning at the latest. Have a good night, gentlemen.”

Just as they turned to leave, George prompted, “I’m not sure if we could act all that well. They’re going to figure out really soon that we’re not a... you know... couple.”

Saskia’s mouth settled in a gentle smirk, her eyes lighting up, signaling the arrival of a quick, murderous remark from her.

“He literally *carried* you despite the physical exhaustion that comes with escaping a near-death circumstance and Apparition.” She spoke. “I don’t think you’ll need to act all that much.”

The last part was spoken so quietly that George had almost missed it. He wondered if Dream did.

Words died on George's lips, there was nothing he could say. All he felt was a short, powerful pang of embarrassment, creeping up his skin in a crimson tint. Before either of them could respond to her, they were left alone.

Dream turned around, his careful eyes scanning the three-storeyed inn, stopping over a large patch of green algae on one of the walls. Soft light shone from the few windows it had, cracks running down almost all of their glasses.

"Look at where they left us," Dream said. "This is precisely why I wanted us to be in the same building as them. I can bet this place sucks so much more than wherever they have their rooms."

"This is all we have. At least they're not abandoning us out in the cold."

"Yeah, well I'm *immensely* grateful to them for doing the bare minimum." Dream spat, voice dripping with unconcealed sarcasm. "Do you need to be carried again? Please say no."

"It's okay, I think I can walk now."

A bell chimed as they pushed open the door that George stupidly tried to pull at. Inside, it was pleasantly warm compared to the biting chill of the night. He saw a brittle, old lady at the dusty reception, a few candles alight at her desk, head bent over a book.

Dream coughed to get her attention, but it was hardly any good. She did not respond and instead turned over a page. There was nobody else in the little seating area, only a gentle hum of unimportant conversations coming from somewhere inside the place.

"Excuse me?" Dream tried, but they were only met with more silence.

He looked to George, his eyes nearly begging him to do something about this and get it all over with. He had had enough for the day, his limbs screaming in protest. All he wanted to do right now was crash in a bed and not get up for a week straight.

"She's given me no choice," George spoke. "*Sonorus*."

"No!" The woman said, her head snapping up. "Turn that off! You're going to wake the entire village!"

Dream chuckled and just like that, there was an arm circling George's waist, pulling him closer until there were lips pressed to his temple. As rapid emotion flooded inside of him and saturated his veins, he was taken aback momentarily.

"Hold me too, idiot," Dream whispered in his ear, his mouth grazing George's skin and leaving behind tingles in its wake.

Act like a couple, Saskia had said. He remembered that now and with that, he slipped an arm behind Dream, hesitant fingers coming to rest upon his build. The heat in his cheeks flared, it seemed to never have left, and he didn't know how long he could keep this up without losing his sanity.

Chapter End Notes

hey! how is everyone doing? thank you for being here and reading this chapter, it means a lot to me <3

please let me know what you think about it in the comments! :)

Twitter: @ IcedTales

just a reminder for the new posting schedule:

i only upload on Tuesdays now (instead of Tuesday and Saturday) <3

sorry

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The little house elf in violet rags stretched to reach the keyhole. George considered taking the key and unlocking the room himself simply because the little creature took too long.

The subdued, barely-there lights of the slim hallway flickered unceremoniously. The moment they had begun following the little elf, Dream had started pointing out cobwebs in a few high corners of the ceilings, constant chants of *'I told you this place would suck'* falling from his lips.

He didn't understand how a few silken threads signaling the presence of spiders around made the entire place suck. He also did not see the point of complaining about such mundane things when getting a fabulous inn wasn't even the reason for their little Hogsmeade trip. He concluded that Dream was just being dramatic per usual and there was little that he could do about it.

"Are you coming?" Dream asked.

George's little reverie was broken apart, and he watched as his companion switched a light on inside the room. Stepping in suddenly felt like a sin, something he must not do. He had been in a closed space with Dream before, and alone. But this was different and he knew it. This was so much more intimate, like he was seeing things he shouldn't, hearing things he wasn't meant to. It felt like an absolute invasion of privacy, both Dream's and his own and he was scared.

But he wasn't exactly being given a choice here.

I've been through worse, he told himself in an attempt to make it all just that much better, and stepped inside, closing the ebony door behind him.

The room wasn't much with its little hearth, a sad excuse for a coffee table, a large window with a long crack on its glass that George noticed when he squinted, a ceiling lamp to provide for the only illumination in the room, and of course, a bed.

He wasn't sure if it was even big enough for the two of them and for a brief moment he considered ordering a mattress. Dream could always sleep on the floor, couldn't he?

He heard a tap go off somewhere, the sounds of gushing water filling the room. Walking in, he found the source of it all, a little joint bathroom set in a corner. The door was left slightly ajar, soft warm light spilling out from the crack. He found Dream's discarded cloak sprawled lazily on a side table, filthy from the events of the day.

All of a sudden, he did not know what to do anymore. Does he sit and wait for Dream to come back?

What then?

In the midst of mild confused panic, his eyes landed upon the two, dark trunks sitting neatly by the other side of the bed. He was about to walk over, pull one of them to the fluff of the mattress and open it when he heard the door creak open.

He should never have turned around. He should have stayed where he was, perhaps done what he had originally intended to do, because right there stood Dream, the top buttons to his shirt undone,

sinful drops of water making their way down the side of his face, clinging to the tips of his hair. His eyelashes seemed lusher, bigger, prettier, now that they were wet.

This was nothing he hadn't seen before. His heart should not be giving him such a hard time about it now. He thought people grew accustomed to things like this after a while, didn't they?

Would he ever grow accustomed to Dream?

"What's that?" He asked, his eyes trained at the trunks George had been looking at.

"I don't know, these were just... here."

Dream asked him to step back and pointed his wand at the solid cases.

"Alohomora!"

The locks on them flew open, and it wasn't until he spotted the Ministry's logo at the backs of the trunks that he proceeded to really look inside. George watched how his fingers worked deftly, removing the broken locks, examining the contents of the two of them.

"It's the clothes and other things," Dream informed. "I think this one's mine."

Silently, George pulled his trunk to what he supposed was his side of the bed. It was nearly too heavy for him, but asking Dream for help was the last thing he wanted to do right now, not when he looked like an entirely different person, someone more intense, more... *himself*. The strange part was, he had not even done anything to cause that shift. Maybe it was just the fact that George would have to share a space with him for longer than he ever had.

In the end, he managed to make it somehow, his tired limbs urging him to give that up and lay in bed already, but his clothes were too dirty, torn even, to sleep in. He picked out a mundane white tee shirt and some joggers he didn't care about.

"Look away," He told Dream, who eyed him like he eyed a constellation through his telescope at Astronomy, his gaze watchful, studying him like the only subject of a crucial experiment.

"Come on, couples don't ask each other to-"

"We're not a cou-"

"But we're *pretending* to be one!" Dream exclaimed, a sly smile dancing on his lips.

"Exactly," George said. "It's a pretense."

He will have to keep reminding himself of that fact before he got used to the lingering stares, the soft kisses pressed to his temples, the warm hand sliding into his own, and casually draping itself around his waist. None of that was George's to keep, and he would need to remember that.

Letting out a deep, long sigh, he whipped around and walked into the cursed joint bathroom to get changed.

At least the clothes fit him, the water in the shower was pleasantly warm and his leg didn't hurt as much after he tended to it with a couple of spells here and there. He remembered how Dream had teased him last year when he had taken Medicine for a summer optional course, telling him how he'd look ravishing in a nurse's fit. He was glad that he never gave in to his mindless taunts and continued with it.

If all went well, a night's sleep might even render his leg as good as new. But sleep seemed like a hard-to-get treasure tonight, what with Dream splayed across the entire bed- diagonally- as if he were the only one allowed on it. He had changed too at some point and George almost missed the clinging linen shirt on him with its loose collar and undone buttons.

He should have ordered a mattress.

He hung his worn cloak from a hook behind the door, and his fingers ghosted over the yellowish switchboard, wondering if he should turn the lights off yet. His dorm had been so much better, he could just pull his curtains and block the glare when he wanted to sleep.

"We meet the entire team at breakfast downstairs," Dream said, his hand holding a parchment sheet. "7 a.m."

"And what time is it right now?"

Dream stretched to reach his side table, peeking at his watch with its delicate gold chain resting on it. The hem of his tee-shirt lifted just enough to give George a glimpse of toned muscle, and he sucked in a sharp breath, looking away almost instantly.

"Quarter to eleven."

George had thought that it would have been much later than that. There was no way that only four hours ago he had been at Hogwarts. Everything that had happened on the way from there to here seemed to have lasted a geological age.

"Switch the lights off, will you?"

George was glad Dream asked and wordlessly complied. The stars shone in through the glass window and when he looked out, he could see the path they had walked down and the subdued lights of the street lamps. It was empty, wet with dew, and strangely inviting.

"Where will you sleep?" George asked, his voice sharp beholding no tones of humor.

"On this bed?"

"We can't... like, in the same place, it's-"

Dream sat up, the illumination from the window washing his features in a soft glow and suddenly the room felt much smaller. George could hardly read the intensity in his eyes, the lines of his mouth. For the millionth time that night, he did not know what to think.

"Are you scared, George?" Dream asked, his voice dipping low in that way again, making George's veins melt and limbs freeze. "What are you scared of?"

The question floated in his head like a random white cloud in a spotless sky.

What was he scared of?

He walked over to his side of the queen-sized bed, and lifting a pillow, he began building a little fort between him and the blond. A warm hand encircled George's wrist and tugged.

"Seriously?" Dream spoke. "What are you, ten?"

"I don't trust you," George blurted out. "What if you attack me in my sleep?"

“You’re literally saying that to the guy who saved your damn life a few hours ago?”

“No, *I* saved *your* life. I made the blast happen, that was what killed them.”

“And nearly killed us!” Dream almost yelled.

George was positive that their little banter must have woken someone up on the floor, but it was oddly satisfying how easy it was for him to get a rise out of Dream.

“Will you let go of me?” George asked, breaking the thick silence that had descended upon them. “Or do you just like holding my hand?”

Images, vivid and colorful of the day back at the library, when George had fixed up his little cuts, flooded his brain. Dream had spat a somewhat similar remark at him then. That felt like so long ago, like it had happened in another universe, in another timeline. The Dream and George then would have their jaws on the floor if they saw the Dream and George now- still bickering, still fighting, but beneath all of that, harboring a wish to make it happen again and again and again, just so they had something to hold on to in the name of the other.

Dream looked down between the two of them, at how unconsciously tight his grip was around George’s slim, pale wrist. He loosened up, but to let go was not a part of his plans. He rubbed his thumb over George’s skin, to soothe it in case his grip had hurt. Before he knew it, his fingers slipped down to hold George’s and pulled at him, raising his knuckles to the level of his mouth.

George had never been kissed so gently and the softness of Dream’s lips upon his skin felt too good to be real. He wanted to scream, *‘This. This was what I’ve been scared of’* but instead, he curled his fingers tighter around the blond’s, feeling the slightly rough skin press against his own.

Why did this always happen? Every single time George resolved to not give in, to keep his distance, to not feel the little tug in his gut, or rather contain it. Every single time Dream managed to fail all of those plans. It was pathetic to him how it always took just a touch of the hand, a kiss pressed to his head, knuckles, lips... and George was defeated.

All of a sudden, he felt Dream’s fingers fall loose, almost slipping out of his grasp. Jade eyes met his own in subtle panic, and George wanted to brush away a fine lock of his hair that fell too low.

“I’m-I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have-”

“Are you?” George asked.

“No.”

George chuckled, watching a slow smile make its way across Dream’s mouth. He traced a finger along its curve, and it wavered slightly, his lips parting upon George’s touch.

“Come here,” He whispered, pulling George in by the hand till the boy’s toes hit the edge of the bed, his dark eyes housing a million questions. *“Please?”*

There it was again, the one word from Dream that made it specifically hard for him to say no. Dream probably had figured that out by now and George didn’t know if he loved or hated it.

He lifted a knee to place it on one side of Dream’s hips, the latter’s hands found his waist. He winced slightly when he finally placed the other knee on the designated side, now straddling Dream’s lap, his heart racing so fast it could probably leave a *Nimbus 2000* behind.

“Are you okay?”

George could only nod, his arms sliding around Dream’s neck. He felt the blond’s fingers dig into his sides, sliding beneath his tee-shirt, rubbing warm circles over his skin.

And then he leaned in, his lips ghosting over the other’s, touching but not quite. He wanted to have another moment of consideration, for himself and for Dream- a final chance to abandon all of *this*, to go back to whatever they would’ve done if George wasn’t sinfully straddling his hips, if Dream wasn’t trying his hardest not to capture the softness of the other’s mouth with his own.

“Tell me I’m not crazy,” Dream whispered. “That you feel more for me too.”

George’s breath hitched, his eyes widening but never leaving Dream’s.

“Since... since when?” George managed to ask.

“I wish I had a date for it, but I don’t. Maybe it isn’t about time at all. It’s... it’s the things that you do- the big ones and the little ones. It’s about... it’s about how I find myself thinking about something you said weeks ago... randomly, how I can’t get your stupid face out of my head, especially when I’m alone, how it would annoy me to no end when you’d not show up to a place where I knew you would be in- a class, some prefects’ meeting, things like that, you know? At first, I thought that maybe it’s just my need for punctuality and order kicking in, but I was wrong. I had always been wrong.”

George watched as moisture made his eyes glisten. Never in a million years had he thought that he would see Dream of all people cry.

“Dream-”

“Everybody is so quick to criticize every single thing I do, maybe you should’ve done the same. Why did you have to ever stand up for me? Why didn’t you give up on the Astronomy duty when you hated it so much?”

“I-”

“Why did you let me kiss you all those nights ago? I wasn’t supposed to... to feel this much. Not for you.”

A tear slipped down the length of his face and George wiped it away with a warm thumb. He did not know if he was sleeping or waking anymore. This seemed more a substance of some wicked, sweet dream than of his cruel, cold reality. The Dream in his conscious life would always tease, remark and comment, but to open up, confess and be vulnerable... George would never have imagined him doing it.

George pressed a warm, soft kiss to his forehead, pulled him into his shoulder, and let Dream hold on to him, just like he once had.

“I don’t know what to feel, honestly,” George spoke. “Everything is this-this massive tangled coil. Anytime I decide to sit with my feelings and figure them out, we are always thrown in the midst of something awfully important, like... like this quest, where we *cannot* let our feelings get in the way.”

“Just tell me that you don’t want me and get this over with.”

“That’s not how this works, Dream. Things are not as black and white between you and me as they

once used to be. You know that. There's... there's a lot of gray areas now and maybe you've figured out what they mean for you, but I'm slow and-and I take time."

Dream turned his face into the crook of George's neck, his warm exhales fanning out over the expanse of his skin, and George's eyes shut of their own accord.

"So, do you need space?" Dream whispered. "To, like, figure things out? Is that what you're asking for?"

"I don't want space. That is solely why I asked McGonagall if there was room for me on this quest. All I need is some time to-"

Dream withdrew in a blink, leaving behind lingering tingles with George. He noticed how the other's nose turned a fiery hue of scarlet when he cried.

"*You* asked McGonagall if you could tag along here?"

"Well, yeah I might've. But she had refused initially."

"*George.*"

"What?"

Dream's fingers were at the base of his throat, tugging at the neck of his tee-shirt, tracing the stiff line of his collarbone like he was memorizing it for a later moment.

"You'll be the death of me."

And it happened, the thing that George always craved until it happened again and again and again. The gentle warmth of Dream's mouth pressed against his own, the little short-circuiting of his brain as he caved in, surrendered, and let Dream turn him into an incoherent mess. His hands found blond hair, lost themselves in it and the intensity between them shot up when George could barely contain a groan as their clothed fronts pressed up against each other.

Dream's fingers caught the hem of his shirt and George didn't need to be told what to do next. The thin fabric was pulled off of him and he nearly shivered when he felt Dream's hands slide up against his bare sides. He pressed a soft kiss to George's sternum, looking up at him in the most scandalous of ways.

"Can I... can I leave marks?"

The whispered question made a blush spread across George's cheeks, reaching so far down as his neck and touching bits of his chest, painting it all crimson.

George gave him a slow nod, his hands already beginning to pull at him.

"Don't hold back."

Chapter End Notes

... hi.

this is the longest chapter that I've written for this fic yet, so just keep it, take it away from here, stuff it into your pockets, do what you will with it xD

please let me know what you think in the comments and my Twitter is @IcedTales if you want to come say hello! <3

take care, stay hydrated, get enough sleep and I'll see you next Tuesday! :)

asleep

Chapter Summary

nsfw ahead.

if you want to skip this chapter, feel free to. you won't miss any plot progress.
people under 18, um, pretend it's not here, alright?

have fun :P

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

George had been here before. He had been kissed before, he had let an ex nibble bruises onto his skin even, he had done so much more than just that. He had always thought that he was hard to faze, hard to please. Some of his exes had even told him as much while bidding their farewells.

Why was tonight an exception?

Tonight he struggled to hold in the desperate shivers of his body and the building heat, as Dream's lips left featherlight kisses on his shoulder, left a dark constellation of lilac and rouge marks across his chest. George wished he would never stop, that time would stretch and make space for just the two of them.

His eyes would close of their own accord whenever Dream found his way up to his neck, left a stray, teasing kiss to his Adam's apple, or the edge of his jaw. Somewhere along the way, their clothes had been discarded, but not entirely. George lay on the foreign, hard bed, with Dream and his warmth and his terrible habit of being a fucking *tease* on top of him.

His finger traced a warm line along the waistband of George's underwear, sometimes sliding it inside only to rub the very beginnings of his thigh, and then with immense cruelty, he slipped it out.

"You feel softer than I had imagined," Dream whispered into his ear, making a fresh bout of heat explode into his chest.

"You used to imagine how I'd feel in your hands?"

“Sometimes.”

George would never fail to get fascinated by how easily Dream always admitted to those things that he would take a billion years’ worth of courage to confess.

“Creep.”

The easy smiles were back up again, and George saw the fresh riots of rose-colored blush coat Dream’s skin.

He slid his fingers in the blond hair, pulling him in and pressing their lips together for the umpteenth time that night. The minty, citrus taste mixed into his mouth yet again, fogging his senses up. They were so close, this was so perfect, how had he gone so long without it? Without Dream’s velvet whispers in his ear, his strong, warm hands on his skin, his lips on George’s?

He allowed the soft slide of Dream’s tongue against his own, the gentle hum of appreciation which escaped the blond, as his large, rough palm made its way between the two of them, between George’s slender legs, sliding slowly up the inside of his thigh, and finally, *finally* closing around the space where he needed it the most.

His mouth opened in an involuntary gasp at the sudden, warm touch, at the press of Dream’s fingers against his clothed crotch and he shuddered as they rubbed slow, confident strokes over it.

“*Please,*” George whined, every bit of shame and lust and something more clouding his brain, spreading in a crimson blush all over his skin.

“What do you want, George?”

Words formed and died on George’s tongue. Everything was too much, his senses screaming for *more, more, more.*

What was more?

His own hands slid to his waistband, attempting to pull the piece of clothing off, and when Dream stopped him, he nearly whined in protest again.

“If anyone’s going to take that off you tonight,” Dream spoke, his voice low but soft. “It’s me.”

George felt his breath hitch, and just like that, his fingers were replaced by Dream’s, his hooked thumbs pulling down his boxers in a slow drag. He watched the blond sit up, dropping it on top of the pile of their shared, discarded mess of clothes.

Warm hands and long fingers held George’s hips in place as Dream leaned down to place a soft kiss right beneath his navel.

“Stay still for me, will you?”

“I will,” George breathed out. “I promise.”

He felt Dream smile against his skin, leaving wet kisses as he moved south, going lower and lower till the heat of his mouth was right above George’s semi-erect cock. He looked up a last time, his eyes heavy with an unspoken question, the last confirmation of sweet, sure consent.

He looked beautifully unreal between George’s legs, somewhere he had never thought he’d find Dream. But he was here now, and this was happening. And he wanted this so much more than he had ever wanted anything else.

With a last glance at the sharp angle of Dream’s jaw, the green glimmer of his eyes, and the strange buds of trust blossoming inside his chest, George breathed out a heavy “*Go on.*”

It was as if every last inch of him was wrapped in a red, all-consuming fire when Dream’s mouth took him in. Wet, warm circles licked around his tip, the delicious pull when Dream sucked, the sinful vibrations of his hums and his groans, his hand tightening with every second around George’s thigh.... All of it sent his eyes rolling back into his skull.

His hand found Dream’s hair again and this time he couldn’t hold himself from giving it a harsh *tug*.

“Please, Dream.”

Green irises were back at him, and George shivered at the hellish beauty of it all- the way Dream’s lips were wrapped around him, his own quivering body lying flushed and needy beneath him, and before he knew it, Dream’s head bobbed up and down, leaving behind the torturous slow rhythms, picking up the pace like that was the only thing that mattered, and George couldn’t stop the embarrassingly loud, filthy sounds that escaped him.

His other hand gripped the sheets, amassing a fistful of them into his palm in an attempt to *stay still*. That was what Dream had asked him. His head spun with the building heat in his hips and his belly, traveling all the way up to his spine, as Dream kept up with his sweet ministrations.

The delicious sting of the blond’s fingers digging into the supple flesh of his thigh almost confirmed that they’d bruise, that they’d mark up more of him than Dream already had.

“I’m-I’m close,” George breathed out between grunts of pleasure he had no control over. “You don’t have to-”

But the hands on him only tightened further, proclaiming Dream’s intents. He wasn’t going anywhere.

In a colorful explosion of bliss and white-hot pleasure, of overloaded sensations and barely concealed lust, George came crashing down. His eyes had closed, his limbs gone numb and the thunderous pounding of his heart slowing down to a mellow, comfortable pace.

When he looked down, he found Dream wiping the remains of George’s fluids from the corner of his lips, leaning down to give the inside of his thigh a last kiss before coming back to lay down next to him.

Hesitant hands lingered between them, before George slid his arm around Dream’s torso, planting a slow, soft peck on his lips.

“Give me a minute and I’ll help you out too.”

“Uh-uh. Tonight wasn’t my turn,” Dream half-whispered. “We’ve had a long day, you’re tired, and don’t you dare lie.”

George shut his mouth that he had parted in protest, a small smile stretching upon his lips instead.

“Sleep, alright? We need to be up early tomorrow.”

George nodded his head in sleepy confirmation, snuggling closer to Dream and his warmth. His excuse was that the room’s cold, and the comforter they had pulled upon themselves was no good. Or at least, not good enough.

Dream pressed his lips to the top of his head, wrapping his arms around George’s smaller frame, and for the first time in a long while, George felt like he could drop his guards, abandon his walls, and *live* .

The slow rhythm of their shared breathing and the crackling of the fire in the hearth made up for all the sounds in the room. George danced around the edge of consciousness when there was a particularly deep exhale from Dream, and then a string of whispered words.

“I really like you.”

His eyes shut tighter, the thrum of his heart becoming labored, and he tried not to move, to keep his breathing even, to *really* seem asleep.

He pretended to not have heard that.

... hey :,)

i hope this wasn't too bad. thank you for being here and reading <3

i do not know when I'll post next. maintaining a schedule has been hard, I'm not gonna lie. but it keeps my horrid procrastination tendencies in check, so...

but whenever i do post, i hope ao3 won't be a mean muffin and sends you a timely notification. i will put it out on my Twitter too, so if you follow me on there, you probably won't miss it at all :)))

so... goodbye, till we meet again <3

tired

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The clanking of delicate crockery at their table was strangely comforting to George as everyone gathered for their ungodly 7 *am meeting* . Had he known that he would be expected to wake up this early, he probably wouldn't have tagged along on the quest.

Despite the lack of sleep, the slight ache in his temples, and the burning in his eyes, he tried to be present. He was here for a reason, and if last night had taught him anything, it was that this little adventure of theirs could go down really quick if they weren't vigilant enough.

Dream on the other hand, looked like nothing bothered him at all, like it was only natural for one to wake up and meet with a bunch of strangers to discuss criminals on the loose.

“How's your leg doing, George?”

He snapped out of his thoughts when he heard Saskia address him. She was still in the cloak from last night, lids heavy with exhaustion, and loose, dark hair falling around her face. He wondered if she had even slept.

“It's alright now.”

The two men she had been with yesterday had abandoned their hats, and in daylight, without the presence of their ridiculous head accessories, George could see how one of them was a fairly young person, perhaps only a few years older than himself. The other one was a grim fellow and seemed to have a permanent frown stuck to his face. His graying hair was thin in the middle, almost creating a bald patch, and one of his cheeks had a thin, feeble scar running all the way down to his chin.

“Good, you'll need it to be so.”

Saskia tossed a sheet from what looked like *The Daily Prophet* , a moving picture covering almost half of it. George's eyes fell upon the man - no, *boy* - in the frame, squinting before the blinding flashes of the cameras hurrying to capture as many shots of him as they could.

Ministry arrests The Dark Lord's youngest pawn

“Didn’t he like, *die* , years ago?” Dream asked. “The Dark Lord?”

“His followers survive and they’re enough to cause frequent mischief.”

George watched the boy’s smooth, pale face scrunch up and ease back. The dark curls of his hair fell into his eyes, and he wondered what could pull one so young into something so dark as this.

“If you’ve already arrested him, then why are we still-”

“Check the damned date, Davidson.”

George’s eyes flicked over to the top right corner of the page, and sure enough, the newspaper was months old.

“And how young is this... this ‘*youngest pawn*’ ?” He asked. “Is he even old enough to be in jail?”

Saskia raised a brow at him and George almost felt stupid for asking the question. All of a sudden, his metallic spoon was the most interesting thing in the room as he fiddled furiously with it. He hoped that they let it pass, dissipate in the air as though it had never been asked. He hoped that they moved on.

“He’s barely of age, but yes, he qualifies to be in prison if *that* is what you’re worried about.”

He felt Dream stir beside him, and before the blond could say something, George placed a restraining hand on his leg, a silent plea to keep shut and let things roll wherever they wished to for once.

He took a bite of the sandwich they had ordered for the sake of an early breakfast. None of them was hungry, especially not George.

“His file name is Alfred Wick. He’s eighteen, turns nineteen next month. We know little about his

family, or where he's from, but he's had a history of theft, arson, and murder," Saskia spoke. "Besides that, we also suspect that he has links with known Death Eaters."

"Impressive resume," Dream commented, teetering dangerously on the edge of offensive sarcasm. "Why couldn't you catch hold of him when he was much younger? This must've taken some time to build up,"

"That's the thing, he excels at Transfiguration. Almost prodigious."

The old man spoke up. George had almost forgotten that he was there. He watched the man take a sip from his nearly abandoned, now gone cold cup of tea.

"I was coming to that Abel," Saskia spoke. "But thank you for bringing that up anyway. Alfred... is something of a genius when it comes to shape-shifting, Transfiguration, et cetera. He's escaped so many times because he would transform himself literally at a lightning pace and just run away. The Ministry had finally caught him a few months ago, but now he roams free again."

George saw as Dream's brow lifted, his arms coming together to fold themselves in front of his chest.

"Was he ever at Hogwarts?" He asked.

"He never went to a school for Magic."

All of this was more than just fascinating to George at this point. Without ever going to a formal institution, it could be incredibly hard to channel the Magic in a way that doesn't harm the witch or wizard. It wasn't so hard to grasp why Alfred was the way he was now.

"Keeping further minor details aside, I'd like to tell you what you actually need to do. Please try to not defy me," Saskia said, her eyes trained on Dream for the last part of her speech. "We are just one of the many search parties that the Ministry has deployed to hunt for him. The plan of action initially is simple- Abel and George will inspect a few samples we found last night while the rest of us will go raid some places where he is suspected to be."

"What if some other party has already searched the place we go to?" Dream asked, the creases on his forehead deepening as he voiced his doubt.

“You don’t need to worry about that,” she replied.

*

George hated the little cave of a room that he was brought to work in- the only thing that could have made this notoriously shady place even shadier. There was nothing here but cold stone walls, a short table with some empty cauldrons and vials, and some thankfully lit candles. Small cobwebs stuck to the corners of the ceiling, their threads glistening in the candlelight.

“Help me bring this in!”

He heard Abel call from the entrance, and he whipped around to find the old man struggling to drag what looked like a body bag inside.

“Is that... is that what I think it is?” George asked.

The pungent odor of the preservative potions filled his nostrils as he neared the frail man, his hands shaking from the exertion of dragging the heavy, dark bag.

“Yes,” Abel confirmed. “She’s one of the prisoners Alfred killed when he escaped.”

George sighed, drawing his wand from the deep pockets of his robes. He failed to understand how wizards literally just forgot that they can use magic and do so many things a Muggle has to lose sweat and blood over.

“*Wingardium Leviosa.*”

The body barely floated an inch above the ground as George maneuvered it inside and let it rest by the little table. Abel stumbled his way to the bag and pulled the zip down, revealing the ghostly pale corpse of a woman, wrapped shabbily in what looked like the human-sized version of a house elf’s rags. The preservatives’ odor grew infinitely stronger now that the bag was open. It mixed with the smell of death, the unmistakable rot and tragedy, and something so far beyond the limits of unpleasantness that it could hardly be named.

He had never seen an actual dead body before; that coupled with the fact that the woman's eyes were still open, staring at the ceiling in a vacant, unfazed way that made the blood in George's veins run cold. Dried, stale blood stuck to her neck, and he placed a hand over his nose and mouth to keep himself from puking right there.

"Abel," George spoke. "I need a minute."

*

Dream tried to be as silent and unnoticeable as his six-foot-three frame would permit him to be. His heart beat so powerfully that he could feel it in his head, pounding into his ears, as he moved on tiptoes behind Saskia in the narrow alley soaked in sewage stink.

"Thomas," Saskia had said to the young Auror that accompanied them. "Be on Clay's heels. Don't leave him be for a single second."

And Dream had wanted to pick a fight, to protest, to say that he did not want to have a babysitter on a fucking quest of all places. Why did they even bring him along if he was to become more of a liability than an asset?

But he kept his quiet. He knew that a single squeak in the wrong place, at the wrong time, could be why they lay six feet under the ground.

He had looked at Thomas, his brown eyes so similar to George's that for a second Dream's mind wandered off to last night, to how George had looked down at him, his cheeks flushed, his lips parted open...

He had to force himself back to the present and look away before he put the wrong ideas in Thomas's head.

He jumped over a stray cardboard carton lying about, exiting the alley to stand in front of another small inn, probably the fourth one they were going to raid for the day. They had had no success so far- sneaking into places overflowing with people, pulling some suspicious ones into the corner, which sometimes resulted in a little bit of a fight. Dream was never going to forgive Saskia for getting him elbowed in the gut thrice for no good reason.

So far, they had managed to get their hands on a small-scale intoxicant smuggler, a thief who wasn't doing so well in his business, and a middle-aged man who needed psychiatric help. If this was what being an Auror was like, Dream thought he might need to seriously contemplate his career plans.

The routine followed. They went inside, looked around. Thomas caught hold of a man trying to run away from them when Saskia *accidentally* dropped her Auror ID on the floor, and Dream forced *Veritaserum* down his throat. The entire place fell silent, staring at their little group in shock, apprehension, and something more. The lady who seemed to be in charge tried to step forward and interrupt, but Saskia was quick as lightning, and she stunned her into silence before she could mess everything up.

“Why did you run?” Thomas asked for the fourth time that day, and Dream prepared himself for yet another unhelpful answer, yet another angry slam of the hand on a nearby desk from Saskia, and more helplessness swirling in his own gut.

“Because I shoplifted from Mr. Ollivander’s!”

*

George did not know how late it was. The basement room with no windows or clocks did not exactly provide the best way to judge time. After working with Abel upon the body for what felt like hours, he had grown used to the stench and gore of it all. His hands, covered in protective gloves, did not feel like a part of him anymore. They felt more like just another instrument, like the cotton ball he held to rub cleaning potions over wounds, or the little nail-sized bowl Abel had given him to collect anything of value which they could extract from her body.

The only little victories they had bagged until now, had been a chipped nail which was hopefully Alfred's (they still had to test that), a black mark, in the shape of a perfect sphere upon her neck when they had cleaned up all the blood, and a loose idea of exactly how she was killed.

Abel had long left the room to ‘rest his brittle, old bones’, leaving a pissed-off George to sort all the mess after him.

Disgusting was a small word for how he felt in the moment. All he wanted was a warm shower that lasted an eternity, good food, and some quality, uninterrupted sleep. He did not think that he was asking for much, but apparently, the universe disagreed with him. This was probably the longest he

had ever gone without eating, but it was hard to do it when he was covered in everything that a person shouldn't be covered in.

He blew the candles out, their happy little flames flickering before extinguishing in a slender string of smoke, and made his way up to the room they had rented last night. He had almost forgotten that he shared it with another person until he was about to unlock the door, and felt large arms wrap around his middle.

“God, why do you smell so terrible?”

Suddenly George did not want to hold himself up on his own anymore. He wanted to lean into the familiar scent of wood, and parchment, and Dream, he wanted to let go.

“Try working in a closed room with a rotting dead body and an old man who smokes pipes like there's no tomorrow,” George groaned. “You'll know why.”

He pushed the door open. They had accidentally left a light on. He waited for Dream to let go of him, to let him walk inside and finally get the day over with, but he held George as close to him as he could, his nose pressed into the fluff of his hair.

“Are we going in?” George asked.

A muffled *yes* was whispered, but Dream did not move until, out of annoyance, George pulled at his hand and nearly dragged him in. Tired Dream was clingy, tired Dream let George pull at his tie, slip his robes off, and did not comment on how flushed George got. Tired Dream called him *an idiot*, over and over and over again, and rested his head on George's shoulder any moment he got the chance to.

George thought he could get used to tired Dream.

“Wait,” Dream spoke. “Where are you going?”

George halted in his tracks, nearly dropping the little bundle of clothes cradled in his arms.

“To shower,” He replied. “What do you want?”

For the blink of a moment, silence lingered, and George could almost feel the arrival of a ground-shifting remark in the way he got gooseflesh. Dream walked up to him- slow but with a renewed spark, his eyes fixed on anything that was George, until he was close enough to touch.

His arms found George’s hips, resting his fingertips lightly on the soft linen of his clothes, closing his warm palms over them.

“Mind if I join you?”

Chapter End Notes

thank you so much for reading! i appreciate you being here <3

i went away for quite some time simply because i hit a block, and it was kinda hard to shake it. but thank you for your patience, kindness, and the 50k hits on this work while i was gone.

i'm so beyond grateful <3

please take good care of yourselves and I'll see you again soon!

big spoon

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

An involuntary gasp escaped George's lips as he processed the electric question that hung between them. He searched for any traces of lightheartedness, of hesitance, of a joke, but there was none to be found- only eyes that were half-shut, but still intent and burning a hole into him, a mouth that turned up slightly at the corners, and fondness. A lot of fondness.

His fingers clutched the clothes in his hand tighter, almost as if they would desert him, leave him alone to give Dream an answer that would be okay, would be *appropriate*.

"You know what?" Dream began. "Forget about that, I shouldn't have-"

"I just think that we're both too tired for something like-"

"You're right, I'm sorry-"

"Let me speak?" George said, his tone louder than he had intended it to be.

Dream's eyes widened, mild shock washing over his features before he composed himself back again. He meekly nodded his head, and George wondered if he had been too harsh.

"I... I just think that we're tired and when someone is tired, they're likely to... you know? Do things they wouldn't do otherwise."

Dream cocked up a brow, looked at George like he was speaking a language he had never once heard.

"What do you mean?"

George tried to gulp down the little lump trying to make itself known inside his throat. He knew he made little sense at the moment, but there was no way he could put his point across without

sounding bizarre.

“Alright,” George began. “Psychologically, it is easier to persuade someone when they are exhausted, make them agree to something they would not otherwise be in favor of, and... and I feel...”

He paused, his words dying at the back of his tongue, and he realized he was on the verge of trembling, of losing the composure he always tried so hard to keep up. He hated how it was so easy for Dream to shatter his glass facade.

It was infuriating, frustrating, *disarming*.

“You feel?”

Dream was closer now, his nose barely brushing George’s. George could almost taste the two words in his own mouth. His lips parted like they always did when Dream was all but a breath away, so close, but never close enough- like lightning and thunder. One lead and the other followed, but ended up crashing together in the same plane, associated together with the same string, put under the same head- a storm, bad weather.

He wondered if they were like a storm themselves- messy, unclear, *intense*.

“I feel like I’ll say and do things that I really, *really* stopped myself from doing.”

I’ll push us into something really dark. I’ll make you do things I don’t think I’m even sure about. There will be no coming back then.

His chest rose and fell heavier than it did before. He was pretty sure Dream could feel it too. There was no way he didn’t.

“Then do all of it,” Dream whispered. “Why do you hold yourself back so much?”

Silence.

It was windy outside, George could hear its harsh whispers from the window, almost yelling at him to say something, say the truth.

“Because I don’t want to regret anything.”

Dream’s hand slid up to hold the side of his face, the pad of his thumb brushing the thin skin under his eye. George did not know when he tilted his head into the warmth of Dream’s palm, let himself be held with so much tenderness as he had never really allowed anyone to shower upon him.

“Take too long and I’ll lock you inside,”

George cracked a smile, gingerly disentangled himself from Dream, the other’s fingers lingering on his skin, reluctant to let go just yet, until all contact evaporated, and he shut himself behind the creaky bathroom door.

“See you when you unlock me then,”

*

Dream lay on his side, turned away from George and toward the window that looked out over a cold, sleeping world. He could see dimly the dips and curves of his bare back, the mellow rise and fall of his profile, the sleep that covered him like a child’s blanket. He wondered if tracing the backs of Dream’s shoulders, the length of his spine with the tips of his fingers would wake him up, if he could get away with that.

He dropped the towel that hung low on his waist, slipped into some underwear, and underneath his comforter. His gaze never left the gentle blond hair, the longer bits of it splayed across the pillow. He couldn’t look away from Dream, and his mind went back to the one night when they had been in the prefects’ bathroom, when he had first seen Dream in so little clothes, when he had first seen the gently sculpted back and admired the column of his throat.

Before he could stop himself, his fingers brushed over Dream’s skin, touching the back of his neck, feeling the soft golden hair at the nape of it. He grew bolder and shifted just a little closer, his hand ghosting over the hard line of Dream’s shoulder.

“I thought you’d take longer.”

George withdrew his hand faster than he had ever done anything in his life. He should have stopped himself, he should have not given in.

He should have not woken Dream up.

“Why did you stop?” He asked, reaching back with his hand to find George’s, still not turning around.

George gulped and put a lightly trembling hand in Dream’s, who pulled him in closer, drew his arm around his torso, let George’s marble fingers rest against the smooth skin of his chest.

“What do you want?” George spoke, voice heavy with a blush.

“I think it’s obvious.”

“It’s not, Dream.”

George felt him sigh against his fingertips, the palm of his warm hand coming to rest over George’s, twining their fingers together, and sending his heart in a frenzy.

“I want you to be the big spoon tonight,”

“Fuck off,” George chuckled. “I’m not cuddling you.”

“Couldn’t say that last night now, could you?”

George felt like he was sitting amid white-hot flames, licking at the tops of his ears, reaching down his neck, and turning all of him an embarrassing scarlet.

He did not just-

“I was having a bad day,” George said. “Yesterday doesn’t count.”

Dream turned around now, propping himself up on an elbow, and George almost reached forward to brush away the hair that got into his eyes.

“And are you having a good day today?”

“Not necessarily,”

He shifted closer, and for a moment George thought that he’d reach for him again, that Dream would take hold of his fingers, lace them together with his own once more.

He didn’t.

George was nearly mad that he didn’t.

“Then logically,” Dream said. “Today shouldn’t count either.”

George clenched his jaw, the cogs in his head turning, trying desperately to think of anything to say which wasn’t the truth. Because the truth was bitter and neither of them was ready for the splinters of it. George knew that very well. All he could do was melt when Dream’s feet tangled themselves with his, attempted half-heartedly to pull George closer.

“Logically, we shouldn’t even be doing what we’re doing.”

The words left him before he could stop them, leaving the knots tightening in his heart as he watched Dream’s brows furrow, the slight smile easing back into a hard line, as the soft bubble covering them burst, and tragedy fell like rain all around them.

“What do you mean?”

An argument, explanations, and splitting his soul open was the last thing he had planned for tonight. But here he was, holding the shards of the glass he had just broken, hoping they wouldn't draw out blood.

"This is really not the right time-"

"How long will you keep running away from whatever *this* is?" Dream questioned. "From *us*?"

George's breath quickened, and he felt like he would lose sanity in every sense of the word. He could feel his heart in his mouth and suddenly there was sweat. His hands shook ever so slightly as he gripped the sheets below him, a nail digging almost painfully into the flesh of his palm.

When he said nothing, Dream sighed, heavy and tired and *done*. So done.

"Please don't pretend like you don't see what's happening," He whispered, reaching his hand forward, laying it in between the empty, cold space between them, right there for George to take. "It's sometimes all I think about. I've been going *crazy*, you don't get it."

That did it for George. He knew he ought to speak something now, that not doing anything would probably be worse than saying something and the regret seeping in later.

There would be regret either way, he knew it.

"I... I get it." George said. "I just don't know what I'm supposed to do about it, about... about *us*, as you put it."

Silence again.

Dream looked up at the ceiling, and George looked at him- reading, gauging, preparing.

"Of all the idiots I could've been stuck with, why did it have to be you?" He said. "You frustrate me so much."

“Trust me, I’m asking myself the same thing.”

Dream looked distant, his face unreadable and cold when he finally looked at George.

“I’m tired,”

“Of me?” George asked, his brow shooting up in question.

“No, *never*. I’m just tired of waiting for you to reach for me and for once in your life,” He spoke.
“Not pull away.”

George could feel his pulse in his head, his mouth was dry as a desert. He knew Dream was right; they had been playing cat and mouse for far too long and there did not seem to be an end to it.

He knew they needed to think about it; *he* needed to think about it and settle on something concrete. As much as he wanted to, he could not leave things hanging here forever.

“What are we, Dream?” He asked. “What is your idea of ‘*us*’?”

All of a sudden, the air in the room seemed to shift. Everything felt like it had been turned over and tossed into a whirlwind. The clouds rumbled low outside.

It would rain soon.

He watched Dream’s mouth part, his eyes moisten as his gaze found the ceiling yet again, looking at anything that wasn’t George.

“I don’t know,” He whispered.

“I don’t know either,” George spoke, gentler than he had all night. “Everything has always been so different for us. It hasn’t been easy to let go of what used to be *us*, the way we had always thought about each other. It’s like moving to a new country and you can’t even spell its name.”

“But I want to learn how to spell its name, and walk down its streets, and speak its language, and... and have a life there.” Dream said, his eyes alight with newfound hope as they fell upon the lump in their comforter that was supposed to be their tangled legs.

“I know,”

“Don’t you?”

“I do too. But stuff like this is risky and takes time, don’t you think?” George sighed, sliding further into his sheets, pulling the comforter over his head. He didn’t want to look at anyone or anything.

They both knew this wasn’t about countries at all. It never was.

There was no answer for a while and he wondered if Dream had finally gone to sleep.

“I’ll wait,” George heard the soft whisper clear as a shout as it settled into the night, found a home in his head.

I don’t want to make you wait. He wanted to scream. But I’m me and I’m slow. You’ve always known that.

Please still know that. Please remember that.

Chapter End Notes

thanks for being here and reading! i'm so glad you're here today and i appreciate it a lot <3

I'm going to go ahead and wish you an early Happy Halloween since I will probably not see you with an update till then! :P

to stay updated on my works and get snippets from chapters before they're published follow my twitter : @/IcedTales!

See ya! Take care!

fool

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dream had never slept in more uncomfortable sheets. It still baffled him how George slipped into a sound slumber almost moments after their little conversation.

He stared at the smooth plane of George's back, interrupted only at the base by a mole- soft, brown, tender- just like his eyes.

Dream hated how everything reminded him of someone who would probably never admit to feeling something for him, who would rather stay away from him than wrap his arms around something that could be theirs.

He decided that the night wasn't in his favor. He needed to be out of the room that suffocated the living breath out of him. Perhaps a change of setting would do him some good.

He fastened a robe around himself, and pocketing his wand, he took one last look at the sleeping bundle that was George. He almost wanted to sit at his side, run his fingers through the thick, dark hair, and not feel afraid- to scare, scar, *break* .

He turned his gaze away before he could do anything he would regret in the morning. The little watch ticking away on his wrist told him that this was not an hour for him to be out of bed, that he had an entire day of tiring raids ahead of him with a merciless team leader who would squeeze out every ounce of energy from him.

The morning was still hours away, but sleep was farther than that. He twisted the knob to his door and strolled down the short hallway, finding himself in the dimly lit lounge of the inn.

The old lady at the reception eyed him with some confusion, but she knew better than to ask what he was doing down here so late. Outside was too cold, and hypothermia would be inevitable if he were to leave the little place like he wanted to.

The room was nearly as sparse as it had been the day they had arrived, save for two men who sat across from each other in a corner. Dream could see one of them lazily hold his glass half-filled with something sparkly blue, tilting to one side at a dangerous angle.

Some of it would spill out at some point, he was sure.

“Why are you like this?” One of them said, his tone drowning in blush and smiles and love.

“It makes you want to go out with me more often,” the other one replied. “I’m happy that I’m like this.”

Dream turned his head away. Involuntarily, a thread of his thoughts went up to the boy that he had left sleeping in their room, the way he would blush the same when Dream said something even borderline flirtatious, the way he would tilt his head into Dream’s touch and not even try to hide it. The unabashed courage and raw bleeding want of it all... Dream hated and loved it.

Sometimes he wondered if he plainly imagined all of that, if he was just projecting his feelings onto George and that George never really got flustered as much as he thought, at least on his account. Maybe he always gave in when someone held him like that.

The possibility singed the inside of his heart, charred it black, and left behind ashes and blood and filth. He was a fool, such a fool for ever thinking that he could have what he wanted, that everything would align itself just for him, and for once, things would work out.

“I’m glad I found you,” someone spoke from behind him, placing a trembling hand on his shoulder.

He turned around so quickly he nearly saw stars, his fingers closing around his wand.

It was only Abel.

“What’re you doing here?”

“Can we talk?” The old man asked. “It’s necessary or I wouldn’t have bothered you at this hour.”

The hardwood table was cold under Dream’s hand. He had hoped for some space and time to think

about whatever the fuck was going on with him. Apparently, it was too much to ask for.

The old man didn't wait to slip into the seat in front of him as soon as he had nodded his head. He probably would've done it without even Dream agreeing to it, but he was glad that Abel had the decency to ask.

"This is going to sound strange, but please help me out before it's too late," He spoke, his fingers gripping the edge of their little table, and Dream leaned forward.

"What're you on about?"

"I was passing by an inn a few hours ago, the one by the crossroads. I didn't want to, but I had to eavesdrop when I heard someone talk about the convict we're after," Abel spoke, his breath shaking as he tried to spill it all out. "I tried to talk to Saskia about it, but she brushed me off. Thomas wouldn't budge either."

Dream slid the slim water jar toward him, and Abel closed his fingers around it immediately. Water slipped down the sides of his mouth and caught in his light beard. Dream saw hints of brownish, rotten teeth and George's review of him from earlier that evening swam through his head.

"What did you hear?"

Abel wiped his mouth on a shabby, dark sleeve. Dream couldn't decide if he always trembled as violently as he was now, or it was just the cold, the anxiety that clung to the apparently horrid news he had.

"I would have pulled them aside for interrogation, but I was alone and I'm old. They would've gotten rid of me as easily as a fly-"

"Are you going to get to the point?" Dream interjected, his tone as sharp as ice.

"Alfred was seen near the woods, the ones where we got attacked on our way here," Abel rambled. "I'm supposed to go there with George tomorrow, but he'll be there and we wouldn't stand a chance. I'm afraid that-"

“You won’t go there tomorrow.” Dream declared, images of an injured George in that very forest flashing bright before him. There was no way he was letting him go there unassisted.

“Saskia will not change her plans. She’s stubborn like that.” Abel spoke. “Besides...”

He stopped, his eyes more unfocused than Dream had seen them all night.

“Besides?”

“If I’ve learned anything from my months of hunting for Alfred, it is that it won’t be a smart idea to take the entire team. The more people you have, the more likely it is that he’d spot you and escape.”

Dream tapped his fingers on the table. The two guys were still in their spot, and Dream was almost jealous that he wasn’t them and they didn’t have to mull over what he did.

They would be here, love filling up their throats, bask in the warmth of their little date, go back, probably have sex... They were lucky. Their little lives were perfectly simple and Dream longed to be them.

“What do you suggest then?” He asked.

“He excels in escaping, not combat. Saskia and Thomas are beyond convincing, but that does not mean that we’ll stop our hunt. If we let him go now, there’s a chance we might not even find him again.” He paused and placed a wrinkled hand on top of Dream’s. “I suggest you go after him. You can take him down and end it all.”

“And what if he isn’t there? What if I’m not back before Saskia is up and she finds out I’m gone?”

Abel’s eyes softened, the dull gray of his eyes looking so much like the storms Dream despised.

“Then he isn’t there,” He said. “And it’s not like you really care if Saskia is mad, is it?”

“I don’t,” Dream spoke. “But you will have made me pointlessly hustle over nothing.”

“Well, you signed up for it.”

Dream couldn’t argue with that. This was technically what he was supposed to be doing here—going after supposed/known criminals, taking them down, helping to get them locked in.

“You’re right,” He spoke. “When should I leave?”

“As soon as you can. He will not be waiting there for you, after all.”

Dream pushed his wooden chair back, gulped some water down, and as he made to leave, he felt Abel tug on his sleeve.

“What?”

“Do not take anybody else. Not even George.” He said.

“He stays here. I’ll never put him and danger in the same room.”

*

Dream closed the door behind him as quietly as he could. The beginnings of a chilly morning peeped through his window. The sky had lightened; it wasn’t the gloomy black he had left the room with, but the sun wouldn’t be up for another hour and a half at least.

He still had some time.

“Where were you?” George asked from under the blankets, his sleep-laden voice raspier than Dream thought it would be.

“Did I wake you up?”

The covers lowered to reveal a nest of dark hair falling into his eyes, nearly covering them up.

“No, I’ve been up for a while,” He spoke. “Come here?”

Dream walked over to the edge of their bed, and George scooted over to make space for him. It was warm, inviting. It was everything Dream had ever wanted. But after last night, he didn’t know if he should take up the offer.

He was short on time anyway.

“Just for a little while,” George spoke. “Please?”

And there was no way Dream would say no to that. He had never stood a chance when George looked up at him through his lashes like that, the soft lines of his mouth pressed shut. If longing had eyes, they would look like George’s. If it had a heart, it would be as heavy as Dream’s.

He slipped in, almost instantly getting wrapped in familiar arms that held him gently at first and tightened later.

George’s mouth was so close to his neck, he could count every breath as it warmed his skin. He shivered.

“This will sound stupid after everything I said last night, but,” George spoke, and his words sunk into the stretch of Dream’s flesh as he hung on to every syllable. “Can I kiss you?”

“I thought you didn’t want to,” Dream replied. “You said that... that we shouldn’t be doing it.”

He felt George sigh beside him, his slim fingers spreading out over Dream’s chest, stopping right above his heart.

“I did, and I’m a fool. I don’t think I’d ever want to *not* kiss you.”

Dream’s hand found the thick of George’s hair, pulling at the strands, dragging his nails along the

pale scalp.

“You confuse me,” Dream whispered.

“I confuse myself too, but I just want to be honest with you,” George spoke. “And the truth is... it is that I don’t see you how I used to see you. It’s all shifted, and it makes my head spin. I’m not sure about what I really want but I don’t want to use you to figure myself out.”

“I’m not... I’m not used to emotional intimacy with someone, at least not romantically. All I’ve ever had is something very temporary, built on lust, designed for instant gratification. I don’t even know if I can do the whole intimacy thing, and it scares me. But you know what?”

“What?” Dream asked, his voice sounding too small, too foreign.

“I’ve never *wanted* to kiss someone with my entire heart,” George whispered. “And I want to kiss you. I want to give you more than what I’ve given the others.”

Dream wanted someone to pinch him and tell him that this wasn’t something he was imagining. The fingers he had in George’s hair halted, and he bit the inside of his cheek.

“Really?”

“Really,” George promised into Dream’s neck, sealed it with a soft press of his lips.

Dream thought he would burn down to ash, crumble to mere dust and filth, right beside George, and his stupid saccharine words that sounded so much like the truth, it made his veins feel tight.

“Kiss me then,” Dream spoke. “And mean it.”

George leaned up, a hand going behind Dream’s neck, pulling him in harsher than either of them had expected. He tasted like pomegranates and sugar, the heat of his mouth pressed against Dream’s own. He tasted like love.

Dream’s chest tightened, filled to the brim with relief, warmth, and a luminescent sense of being

wanted. His hands went to the base of George's spine, fingers skimming over the warm shape of it, and George pressed himself closer.

"Do you believe me now?" He asked, breaking away only to be pulled back in by Dream, who hummed his approval and didn't let go.

"Promise me something," Dream whispered into the kiss.

"Anything you want."

Dream's heart gave a painful lurch. George was never so generous in giving away his word, but he needed it today. He could not complain.

He brushed a thumb across George's flushed cheek. He had never seen a prettier color.

"You're supposed to go to the woods today, isn't it?"

George nodded.

"You won't go there with Abel," Dream spoke. "Or alone. You're not going there."

George's brows furrowed, nose scrunched up in the way that made Dream want to run a finger along its length, smooth out the pale folds of skin.

"Why?"

Dream sighed. This was the question he didn't want to answer. If he was honest, George would most likely not let him do it, and he had never done lies. Even if he wanted to make something up right now, it wouldn't work- he was too bad at it and George was too smart. Smarter than he gave himself credit for.

"*He's* there, most likely he is. I'm going to go after him so we can get him locked up and get out of this mess as soon as we can."

“What do you mean *you’re* going after him?” George asked. “Saskia and Thomas would go too, wouldn’t they?”

“They refused. They don’t think it’s true.”

“Then you should refuse too, Dream. They’ve been doing this for much longer than you have. They know what’s up here. Maybe it is false.”

Dream clenched his teeth together.

“And what if it isn’t?” He asked. “We’re going to lose him for who knows how much longer. And besides...”

He stopped, eyes boring into George’s, pleading for agreement to let him do what he wants just this once.

“Besides?” George asked.

“He’s going to be there. You can’t be so close to him, George. I would never let that happen.”

“You’re being irrational.”

“Am I?”

“Yes.” George declared.

The silence was loud. Neither of them looked away, as if looking away meant surrender, it meant *defeat*.

“Remember how I pocketed a wish from you? Dream asked. “From when you lost the Charms bet?”

George's mind raced back to the day, how Dream was soaked in glory over the sheer fact that he had scored more in that test, that George had lost.

"Come on, that was just play-"

"No, it wasn't." Dream spoke. "A victory is a victory. Give it to me."

George sat up, untangling himself from their shared warmth.

"Don't be a child, Dream."

"I'm just claiming my wish, George. There's nothing childish about that."

He slowly got out of bed, reached for his cloak, and fastened it around himself. He wondered how much time he still had left.

Damn George and how weak he made him.

"I've got to leave before he runs off," Dream said. "Please, just say it. Keep your word, George, or I'm going to have to assume that you will."

When Dream looked at him again, his eyes glistened, moisture threatening to spill down his cheeks.

"What if he is there?" George asked. "What if the thing you're trying to shield me from comes after you?"

"Then I face it," Dream spoke, his voice barely more than a whisper. "That's what I signed up for, isn't it?"

A tear did slip down and George never wiped it away. He only extended his hand for Dream to

take. Dream did.

“Come back to me,” George kissed his knuckles. “Go.”

Chapter End Notes

hi! thanks for being here and reading. i really appreciate that a lot <3
let me know what you think in the comments! :))))

see you in some time! <3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dream had Apparated right after, leaving George cold on his bed, still too stunned by everything. After he had made the most honest, intense, and raw confession of his little life, the one who it was for had dissolved into thin air, and George still had to wrap his head around that.

Maybe this was his karma for doing what he did to Noah, even though he knew of his feelings. Maybe he deserved this after stringing Dream along for so long too. He rubbed at his eyes, the heels of his palm pressing into them almost painfully. He wanted to scream at the top of his lungs but it was too early. The entire inn would hear him, and this really wasn't the best time to get kicked out of the place.

It took him longer than usual to get out of bed, slip into fresh clothes, gather his stuff, and get started with his day. As he twisted the key into the little lock, he wondered if Dream had found Alfred. He hoped not. He didn't want him to fight the little menace maker on his own, no matter how capable he was of bringing him down.

When he reached the little basement room where he had spent the majority of his time the previous day, he couldn't help but sigh at the prospect of inhaling unwanted tobacco smoke all day long yet again. He wished he knew a spell to block that out.

As he pushed open the door, he stopped dead in his tracks, eyes widening into coffee spheres. All he could see on the floor was red. Blood, sticky and abundant and drying, pooled around the entire place, and at the head of it all lay the old man who examined the dead with him, becoming one of them.

"Ab... Abel?" George called out as if Abel would shoot him a response, as if anything at all would come out of it.

He slowly stepped inside, walking around the red, and knelt beside the old man. With trembling hands, he put his gloves on, and took Abel's pale, bloody face in his palms. His fingers crept to the skin under his jaw, to his pulse point, and when he found no sign of life, no pulse dully thudding under his fingers, his heart hammered faster as if on Abel's behalf.

His breath hitched, and when his eyes fell upon the body they had been working on the previous day, he couldn't help but fish his wand out. Doing away with the dirt and blood on Abel's feeble, wrinkled neck, his lips parted and panic gripped his throat with tight, cold hands at the sight before him.

There lay the black, spherical mark that every single victim Alfred had murdered carried- the doom, horror, and gut-churning nausea that it brought.

He got up, leaving Abel to himself on the ground. The blood had mostly dried but there was still a significant amount that hadn't. Abel couldn't have been killed more than a couple of hours ago, and he wondered if Alfred was still around, if he had walked himself into a death trap.

He rushed out of the room, didn't know if he was closer to crying or passing out, but pushed himself to get out of the hallway that felt much narrower than it had been when he had first set foot in here. It felt designed to swallow him whole, eat him up alive, and suffocate him to his death.

He hardly realized when he reached the gates to the other inn, pushed through the doors, and got held up by the people at the reception.

"You don't understand!" George protested in the hold of a particularly larger man. "I need to see them!"

"Sir, we cannot call anyone for you this early!"

"Let me go!"

He struggled against them until he felt something in his pocket shuffle and drop to the ground. The temporary blue-black Ministry identity card that Saskia had given him over breakfast the previous morning lay there, in contrast to the almond tiles of the floor, and the man picked it up.

He went over it, held it up to the little lamp at the desk, and hastily handed it back to George when he realized it was as real as they came.

"I'm sorry for keeping you here," He spoke. "You should have said you were from the Ministry."

“Well,” George replied. “Can I go now?”

“I’ll escort you.”

As soon as he faced the oak doors to Saskia’s room, he sent the man away, something about confidential Ministry business that needed to be carried out in private. He had narrowed his beady eyes in suspicion, but left without another word. George knocked his knuckles at the door, loud and swift, probably waking up more than just the person behind it, until Saskia finally opened.

“Why are you here?” She asked, her eyes barely open, begging for a good few hours of sleep.

“It’s Abel,” He spoke.

“What happened to him?”

“He’s dead!”

Her eyes widened, disbelief shining at their corners, and her mouth parted.

“George, go back to sleep,” she said. “I *just* talked to him like half an hour ago.”

“No, *you* are the one that needs to wake up from sleep,” George spoke. “He’s been dead for at least a couple of hours! The blood was dry-”

He held up his gloved hands, caked with blood and dew, and George was finally feeling the exhaustion in his bones, burning through his ribs and settling deep within his limbs.

“You need to believe me.”

Everything happened so fast then- getting Thomas out of bed, the rush back to The Green Dragon, and the sprint down to the little basement laboratory they had set up. They ushered George between them, Saskia moving in front of him and Thomas watching his back, their wands up and ready, and all George wanted to do was curl up in a corner and have his peace.

“It was Alfred,” George spoke. “Abel has that little mark on his neck that Alfred leaves. It’s him.”

Saskia knelt down next to the pale, blood-covered body on the ground, her hand ghosting over Abel’s eyes, shutting them for good. She didn’t look up for a while and George wondered if she was crying.

He could never imagine someone like Saskia breaking down over anything. She always seemed so put together, her face set in stone, the only visible thing to cross her countenance being rage or mockery.

Her shoulders shook softly, and he watched as she lifted a woolen sleeve to wipe her face.

“He transfigured into Abel,” Thomas said, his jaw tightening at the realization.

“It was him. It was Alfred,” Saskia spoke, her voice shakier than he had ever heard it. “He was right in front of us and we let him go and Abel had to die for it-”

George knelt beside her, putting an arm around her slender, cloaked shoulders briefly before she brushed him away.

She got up, the tip of her nose burning a bright pink, and Thomas rushed to put Abel into the empty body bag that lay nearby.

“Why don’t you call Clay down too? We need to be setting out soon.”

George had completely forgotten about that and if he had felt panicked earlier, it felt like getting hit by an avalanche of nerves and prickling apprehension now.

“He went to the woods. He said that... that you didn’t believe Alfred was there, so he’d go alone.”

“Did he say who told him to go to the woods?” Thomas asked and George only shook his head, his fingers going numb.

“Thomas,” Saskia said. “Ask the Ministry for some troops. We’re leaving.”

*

When the two Aurors made to Apparate, George clung to Thomas’s sleeve.

“I can’t Apparate yet,” He said. “I’ll need you to do it with me.”

He heard Saskia sigh, the hood of her cloak back up. She would have been beautiful if George didn’t know her to be such an uptight character.

“You’re not coming with us,” she spoke. “We’re going to involve ourselves in dangerous business and I’d like to not babysit someone on the side.”

“You won’t need to babysit-”

“The likelihood of your friend dying increases with every second you keep us here,” she spoke through gritted teeth. “We can still chat if you’d like.”

George’s lips sealed shut, his eyes watering even though he didn’t want to be vulnerable in front of them. He didn’t like getting slapped in the face with the fact that Dream was sitting so close to the edge, standing on one leg on the line that set apart life and death. There was a thunderous silence for a second before Saskia spoke.

“That’s what I thought. No matter what happens, you are not to leave the inn premises. If we need you, we’ll call for you. Until then-” she fished out some dead, dried leaves from the depths of her pockets. “-take these. They help with nerves.”

George extended an open palm before her, and perhaps he imagined it, but he saw a sad smile blossom upon her lips before she dropped them in his hold.

He watched, and like Dream before them, the two dissolved into thin air as well, becoming one

with what made up the universe and everything it contained, probably standing in the cursed woods by the time he had comprehended their departure.

It was then that everything caught up to him, the lack of sleep, the confession, Dream's swift goodbye after, and George's sheer stupidity in letting him go. If he would have put his foot down, none of this would ever have happened. Dream would still be here, safe, and probably in his arms.

They could have talked more about last night, about anything else in the whole wide world, Dream could be upset and raging, but he'd rather have that than his absence. He'd have that than the burning apprehension melting away his ribs and eating at his heart.

"I'm sorry," He whispered to no one in particular, his eyes burning with unshed tears, unsaid words, and unfulfilled dreams. "I didn't try harder."

*

Every tick of the clock was torturously loud to him, every second the equivalent of a geological age. Time worked so strangely, always in complete disagreement to those who went by it- fast when we want it to slow, slow when we want it to be swift, despite that, all we can do is to hold its smoky, cruel hand and let it lead us wherever it wants to.

He had been down to the lounge more times than he'd like to admit, paced the corridor enough times to know how many steps it took for him to cover its length, and every single time he'd had to resign himself to the little room Dream and he had been assigned.

He should've had lunch by now. He had skipped breakfast too, but his appetite had been robbed. His stomach felt like it was filled with a million pebbles, all sitting there, unmoving, weighing him down. His throat closed with it too, and there was no space for food or anything for that matter, not even a single painless breath.

Seconds had piled upon each other and made minutes, and minutes made hours. It wasn't supposed to take this long, was it? He should've heard from them by now.

He had bitten off a nail to a painful extent, and his feet hadn't paused tapping the heel of his shoe against the hardwood floor. He needed to be moving, needed to be anywhere but here, anywhere he could help. But Saskia had asked him to stay where he was, that stepping out wouldn't be the best thing to do, that even though he thought it might be helpful, it won't be.

But Saskia wasn't him, and that was what *she* thought was right, and not him. Even if it proved to be an awful idea, it would be his. Even if he wasn't any help at all, he'd be *there*. He'd be with Dream, he'd be where he needed to be.

And so he slipped his wand into a pocket, sloppily locked up the room, and rushed to the posterior exit of the inn. From what he remembered of an afternoon stroll at the place, they kept spare broomsticks in a wooden rack around there.

His fingers closed around what looked like a *Nimbus* . He didn't care to check what model. He knew Dream would have.

"Hold on a bit longer. For me." He mounted the broom, and before he could blink another time, he was flying.

Chapter End Notes

hello! thank you for being here and reading, i appreciate you! <3
i know people get attached to fics, and like all things, Charmed would have an end too, which is quite near tbh. this chapter marks one of the closing chapters for this story, and although i'm not sure exactly how many parts would follow this one, there's a palmful!
thank you for everything, i can never be grateful enough for your time <3

soot

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

The woods looked the same but felt so vastly different. George flew past rows of similar trees, going as slow as the broom would permit him, scanning the ground and the sky. His palms were clammy on the cold wood, and breathing was expensive.

He had been flying for so long that his body felt stiff in every joint and some of him had gone numb. He did not know where to find the others, *if* they were even here. All he had was some hope, and dark, suffocating panic, a burning need to see Dream's face and the cocky smile George had grown fond of.

As if the heavens had heard him, he saw smoke rise from in between the trees, not too far from where he was. He sped to the grey-white clouds of toxins and ash, and when he touched his feet to the burnt ground, the foliage on the forest floor charred black and turned to soot, he could not help but put a hand to his pounding heart.

Little fires still burned in a few places, dying down and rekindling again and it wasn't until he caught sight of a torn piece of striped green and silver cloth, the Slytherin colors stained by mud and blood, that he screamed out names, no matter how stupid the idea had been.

"CAN YOU HEAR ME?" His throat burned as the words escaped him. *"DREAM?"*

His legs wobbled, and the broom in his hand nearly fell off so many times as he jogged around, yelling, and sobbing, and searching, but not giving up. Never giving up.

The leaves crunched beneath his feet as he ran, and in a different world, it would've been almost soothing to hear that but today it was blatantly annoying. The column of his windpipe burned as he left behind tree after tree, his lungs screaming for him to stop and catch his breath.

As his vision blurred when hot tears settled on his lids, wet his eyelashes, and slid down his dry, cold cheeks, a little tug on his cloak made him halt in his tracks. He turned around, ready to pluck out a thorn that had probably caught him, but instead, he found a tiny figure, its pointed ears turned uncharacteristically down. Large grey eyes peered up at him, blinking ever so slowly, and George sat down.

The elf fiddled with its rags but didn't speak up, much to George's growing impatience.

"Do you know what happened here?" He asked, but the little creature only averted its gaze. "Come on! Tell me something!"

"The Masters at the Ministry did not permit me to speak of this," It spoke at last. "But you shouldn't be here."

George huffed out an annoyed breath and before he could think it through, he grabbed the tiny elf by the shoulders and shook it nearly with violence.

"I am one of the Ministry!" He yelled into the polluted forest air. "Tell me what happened!"

The elf trembled, fearful little squeaks escaping its thin lips, and George only saw one way to end it all. He yanked his dark Ravenclaw tie from his neck and held it up between the two of them.

"I'll free you if you tell me," George spoke. "I promise."

The watery grey stare was back at him again, and for once, the elf stopped shaking. The silence that hung then made George want to rip out his hair, burn the forest down one more time, and reduce everything to flakey bits of white, and grey, and black.

"I have never seen duels like that. Wizards have often clashed, stirred the ground with its impact. But this... this was hardly a simple *clash*," The elf spoke. "It reeked of blood and *dark*, dark magic once they were done. I'm only here to clean their mess. And the mess alone tells me more terrible things than I've ever heard."

George swallowed hard, the familiar tingle inside of his nose rising, and he inhaled deeply to keep tears away.

"Did you see anyone?" He asked. "Can you- can you tell me what they looked like if you can't give me names?"

The elf shook its little head, his hand reaching forward to close around the blue tie, but George

held on to it tightly.

“Do you know where they’ve gone then?”

He could feel the gentle tug on the cloth that rested between his fingers, the elf pulling it toward himself ever so slowly.

“Where do the dead go?” The elf answered, and George let the tie slip from his palm.

Where do the dead go?

The question floated around in his head like a rain-filled cloud as he sank to the ground, his knees hitting the forest floor with an audible rustling of the leaves. He blankly watched the elf limp away from him, going wherever the fuck a free elf would go. There was no way a brainless creature like it could tell the absolute truth.

Not everyone could be dead, could they?

He pocketed the piece of the Slytherin tie he had found, filthy as it was. It was still Dream’s. At least he thought it was his. His head had never spun so fast, so thoroughly, and he feared he might pass out. He couldn’t afford to, not right now, not when he had to find the one person he had prayed would be safe.

He had hoped to find something here, but all he got were more questions, and he was more devoid of hope than he had ever been. Something inside of him remained lit though, screaming for him to get up, to look some more, to look for Dream because Dream would never break a promise and Dream had promised to be back. He had to be back. He had to keep his word just this once and he could break all others that he gave to George from then on.

Where do the dead go?

And George found himself putting his face in his hands, on the verge of letting out the screams he had been shying away from. He could feel something crumble and dissociate into miserable atoms inside of him. He had never felt hollower, the space inside of his pallid body had never seemed so huge, and as if it was missing everything vital.

Maybe it was. Nothing good for him remained inside of him- no sleep, no water, he had hardly eaten. A weak throb he called his pulse remained, but what good was it? He figured he didn't really want it anymore. Not in that moment, when everything held significantly lesser meaning than it ever had.

He screamed so loudly he was sure that he'd have nothing left for a voice box if he kept it up for a few minutes, but he couldn't stop. Something in him begged to escape, tightening around his throat and wordlessly strangling him. He wailed out into the void, five letters sitting on the tip of his tongue and it was the only word he knew then, it was all he could say.

Dream?

His fingers closed around the base of his throat, and he choked on tears, and mucus, and smoke, and pain. Black gradually clouded his vision as he coughed violently, unwillingly gasping for air.

His eyes closed and the last thing he remembered before his shoulder hit the ground was approaching, swift footsteps and distorted sounds that were oddly similar to voices.

*

Something cold touched George's forehead and his nose crinkled, an instant chill running down the length of his spine. His head was too heavy, and his fingers closed in a fist around soft wool at his side.

"He's waking up, I think," a familiar tongue spoke somewhere close to him, but he didn't have it in him to open his eyes yet. "George?"

Parts of him came alive, and his lips parted as he tied the strings together in his head and placed a name to the voice.

"Karl?"

"Oh my god, you're okay," Karl exclaimed, and he didn't have to open his eyes to know that he was being smiled at. "I'm right here, George."

“It’s a dream, isn’t it? You can’t be here.”

He felt a warm palm slide atop his own, rubbing over his fingers and pressing gently at the nails. Karl raised it to his mouth and when a soft kiss was dropped upon the back of his hand did he blink open his lids, his vision insanely blurry at first but getting better rapidly with every second that passed by.

His gaze landed on a familiar dark ceiling, and soon enough, he spotted the thin curtains that separated his dorm bed from the rest. Karl sat close to him, his knee brushing against George’s elbow, a soft smile gracing the pink of his kind mouth.

“How did I-”

“I’ll tell you everything,” Karl spoke. “But I need you to take this first.”

The coldness pressing against his forehead had been an ice pack, and Karl set it aside before helping him up. George winced at the ache that shot through his skull and settled between his brows. He hated when this happened.

A warm cup was pressed into his palms with instructions to blow and sip as fingers of steam hit his face. Had he been wearing his glasses (that he didn’t really need but kept around for the aesthetic), they would have fogged up.

“You were burning in fever when they brought you in from wherever it is that you were. Madam Pomfrey had a look at you and decided that you didn’t really need to stay in the hospital wing. So she sent you here.” Karl explained.

All at once, images- dark, and vivid, and terrible flooded his brain- the forest, the soot, the gentle press of his lips against firm knuckles.

Come back to me.

His breathing picked up.

Where do the dead go?

He nearly dropped the cup in his hurry to get rid of it and turned to face Karl. His fingers went cold, trembling where they lay in his lap.

“Wh-Where’s Dream?” He asked. “Did they bring him in too?”

“I don’t know about that. They won’t let anyone get close to the hospital wing,” George slid the blanket off of him, swinging his legs to dangle from the side of his bed, “but I’m sure he’s fine. George! Where are you going?”

His head spun as soon as he was on his feet and he nearly fell back down on the hard mattress. Karl was by his side in no time, sliding an arm around his waist and keeping his frail form up.

“I need to get there,” George declared. “Take me there,” and with an almost broken heart he added, “please.”

“I would have, but they’re not letting *anyone* in. I told you that.”

“I can’t stay here. Just take me, please.”

Karl looked hesitant and would have protested had George not been clutching on to him with all his strength, looking at him as though he was some messiah and his world was apocalyptic.

They walked out, making their way through the wide corridors with dark walls. Mr. Finch had let the torches burn out and Karl had to resort to the lit tip of his wand to find his way to the hospital wing. George violently shivered beside him, his skin unhealthily warm to the touch.

“Are you sure you’re okay?” Karl asked. “We can always go later.”

“No, we can’t!”

And he knew not to push it further. Slowly, but finally, the looming arch of the hospital wing came into view, and outside of the tall front gates, stood two robed figures that George otherwise would have been intimidated by, but not today. Nothing would deter him from what he wanted today.

The guards shifted closer upon spotting the two of them, and George couldn't help but notice the huge embroidered Ministry logos on their dark clothes. He had come to hate the shape of it.

"You can't go in," One of them spoke, his voice a scratchy, low rumble.

"I feel sick," George declared. "*I need* to go in!"

Their faces remained set in stone, not a single expression passing over them to give something away. The entrance was still blocked and George wondered what he'd do if they didn't let him in.

"He went to Hogsmeade with them too," Karl added, his fingers pressing gently into George's shoulder.

"Are you injured somewhere?" A guard asked.

George was too exhausted to think of anything and before he could produce a lie about some grand injury that he had sustained but would only allow a healer to look at, the truth fell from his lips.

"No, but I came back with a fever which hasn't gone down. I had passed out and I fear it will happen again," He spoke. "*Please* , just let me in."

They seemed to consider his request as their skeptical gazes washed all over him, and he didn't have it in him to even feel bothered by it anymore. He just stood there, pallid body supported by his too-nice best friend who didn't deserve to deal with his tantrums, while every fiber of him ached to push inside those tall gates and search the entire wing for a familiar head of honeyed hair.

"Get in," the low rumble sounded again. "But your friend stays here."

Chapter End Notes

well this took a bit longer to get here than i had originally planned, but life gets in the way sometimes :P

thank you for being here and reading! i appreciate it a lot <3

take care!

Twitter: @/IcedTales

thanks

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Uncertainty was a foul thing. George had always despised it from his core. It lead him down narrow, constricting thought trails, snatched sleep away from right beneath his eyelids, and left him gasping for air.

As the double doors to the gloomy, busy hospital wing were pushed open, an air of apprehension washed all over him. His heart was nearly in his mouth, head getting lighter by the second, but he knew this was not the time to give in to all of it. Clenching his jaw, he held himself together.

An elf scurried past his feet with stacks of bandages in its little arms. Grunts of pain came from somewhere beside him. He walked down the dreadful demonic aisle, scanning through the beds on either side of him, the people standing by them with concerned, pained faces, and he wished upon a non-existent star to not be one of them soon.

He had been in this wing a good few times before but never had it seemed so large, yet so full to the brim. It was hectic, fast, and unimaginably depressing in this part of the castle today and all that fell into his ears were sniffs, hushed voices, and sobs, and he stopped dead in his tracks when he heard a high-pitched wail from a bed close by.

“How did you get in?”

George turned to find Niki, vials full of some sketchy-looking potions cradled in her arms.

“I could ask you the same thing,”

“It’s a madhouse down here today,” she explained. “There was some criminal the Ministry was after and a lot of the people who went there to get him got injured. Madam Pomfrey called some of us Medicine students to help her with it-”

“Are *all* of them from the Ministry?” George cut her off.

Dread and hope mixed together in a vicious combination and coursed through his veins. The seconds ticked by too slowly, and he watched as Niki's brow lifted in a silent question.

"Ninety percent. I don't think you've got Medicine, have you?"

George's bottom lip quivered, and he could feel his fingers shake as he lifted them to rest lightly on the tops of her arms.

"Is-is Dream here?"

Years passed in a matter of seconds, time was distorted beyond all limits. George with his faint breath and light head felt so powerless, but came alight with hope when he saw Niki nod.

"I was just with him, in fact," she spoke, and it was the sweetest thing George had heard in days. Her pink hair was pulled up in space buns, just like the day she had sung to them by the lake. He remembered with a smile. "I'm sorry, but I'll need to know if you've actually been permitted to stay here before I have to call for the Wing security."

George's face felt much hotter, his eyes pooling with tears as hot as molten lava, slipping down the length of his face as he struggled to believe that after countless hours of grief, misery, and unbearable pain, he had *finally* found Dream.

"I was a part of their team too," George spoke, his voice heavy with an ache he couldn't quite bear anymore. "Can I see him? *Please*?"

Hesitation sat bright in Niki's light eyes, and George didn't think he had it in him to wait for a second longer.

Let me know he's alive and that he still knows me. Let me call him by his name and see his head turn. Let me worship everything I took for granted.

"Just a glance," He promised. "And I'll be out. Just *please* let me see him."

She looked around to check for any eavesdroppers before pulling George into an unconscious

patient's space, drawing the curtains behind them.

"The second last bed to the left in the Burns Hall," she nearly whispered. "And I didn't tell you this, alright?"

George didn't know how to thank her enough, and after giving her the reassurance that she wouldn't land in any trouble on his account, he darted off toward the adjacent hall as fast as his aching, nearly jelly legs could carry him.

The rough pounding of his heart was the only sound in his ears, and everything around him was a buzz of careless, grainy white. It felt like gliding through clouds as time stretched thin before him, every pulse point he had throbbing painfully. He vaguely saw the golden and black sign on the arch of the entrance to the Hall.

'Burns Unit', it read in plain and bold letters and George slowed down as he made his way to the end of the place, in search of the *second last bed*, of a head of golden spun hair, of faint freckles that looked like fragile art.

His eyes wandered and glazed over the occupants of the beds, feet nearly tripping over themselves, until he found who he had been looking for, covered in the fluff of a blanket, lying so still that George was nearly afraid of taking another step in his direction.

There lay Dream, an arm covered in thick bandages, eyes closed and tired of the world, and George nearly broke down at the sight in front of him. He had always been so strong, mighty in his stature, and even before *everything*, George had thought that he would be pretty much physically invincible.

To see him lie broken and frail in a bed that was nearly too small for him poked giant needles through George's heart and ruptured its thin, exhausted walls. Gingerly, he walked closer, and closer, and closer still, until he could touch the expanse of Dream's skin and hold his bandaged hand.

George dropped into the little visitor's seat beside the bed, and before he knew it, he was curling pale fingers into light hair, rubbing the pads of his thumbs across Dream's cheekbones.

The skin was warm to the touch, a steady pulse beating beneath his flesh, and George pressed a lingering kiss to his temple, his own head falling onto the pillow beside Dream's.

“Don’t just lay there,” George mumbled into the air between them, his words slow, fingers rubbing circles into the back of Dream’s hand. “I’ve missed you.”

The sounds of shuffling feet, urgent voices, and glass breaking somewhere prevailed. Light from the enormous windows fell in columns and made itself home on Dream’s freckles, and for a moment, George thought he had stirred. He hadn’t.

The tears had made their pathetic return, soaking the thin pillow covers, and George shifted closer, tracing the gentle arc of Dream’s nails. He pulled the blanket higher up to cover his naked torso and chest, which he now noticed were littered with numerous cuts and angry abrasions, as though he had been dragged on thorny ground, and a choked sob left his lips.

“You’re an ass for doing this to yourself,” He spoke. “You didn’t *have* to go, and now... now you’re in this stupid bed, and I don’t know if you’re hurting, or when you’ll wake up.” He nuzzled his face into Dream’s neck. “Fuck you for messing with me like this.”

There’s still no response, not that George had expected one anyway. As much as he wanted to get him up, have a conversation, make sure he was as okay as a person in a hospital bed could be, and kiss the life out of him, he knew he’d have to leave soon and let him heal.

For now, the fact that he was breathing and within reach would have to do. This was all he was being allowed, and he’d take it. He’d take it gladly. He watched the subtle rise and fall of Dream’s chest, scratched his scalp in gentle motions, and let the linen of his sheets brush his knees every time he moved.

Time slowed down considerably, and it was almost peaceful once again. His luck seemed to have tired out in its venomous attempts to test him, and *this* almost felt like a break. Like he could be happy again.

“I’ll be back soon.”

He pressed a soft kiss to his cheek and as he made to slip his palm out of Dream’s, longer fingers stirred and held onto his weakly. George’s head shot up, dark eyes catching the slight movement of Dream’s mouth, his dry, chapped lips parting to suck in a sharper breath.

“Dream?” George called softly, weighing each syllable of his name with caution and love. So

much love.

“*George*,” his lips formed the shape of George’s name in a barely-there whisper.

He touched the fingertips of his good hand to his other one, a broken sigh leaving his chest as the friction from the bandages settled into his skin.

“They’ve turned me into a fucking mummy, haven’t they? I’m not injured *that* badly.”

His voice was hoarse, strained, and weighed down by lead. George chuckled.

“No, they haven’t,” He reassured. “How are you feeling?”

Dream’s eyes fluttered open and when they met George’s, they were as fond as ever, shaped by kindness, lids pulled down from exhaustion, and all George could think of was how much the world would suck for him if these had slipped away.

“Fantastic, now that you’re here,” Dream smiled, almost sadly. “I didn’t think I’d make it back.”

George was gentle in leaning down and pressing a kiss to his warm forehead. It was so hard to not beg Professor McGonagall for a time-turner just so he could go back to the past and deliver himself a terrific blow to the head for every time he had turned Dream away.

He had never thought that there would come a time when he would admit to feeling like he should have met someone sooner, in a different time, a different place, an entirely different context. Maybe he would have noticed the curve of Dream’s smile a lot earlier, the way his eyes glimmered with enthusiasm every time he talked about Quidditch or Charms, the way the sun caught his hair, and how he saw things and commented on which of his friends or family would’ve liked them. Maybe he would have not fought against himself for so long.

“I’m glad you did. I’m afraid of what I would’ve done if you hadn’t.”

Their faces were so close that George could count each eyelash on Dream’s lids, and no matter what the other would say, he did not want to stop looking. He did not want to cease admiring the

blissful sight he had stupidly deprived himself of in the name of *embarrassment* .

Dream's brows creased.

"What would you have done?"

"I don't know," George spoke. "Probably something you'd call me an idiot for. And then I would've done something else which would've grabbed your attention and put it on me, hoping you're there somewhere, shaking your head, calling me an *idiot* ." His voice broke. "I would never have gotten over you, you know?"

He could see just the beginnings of moisture pooling in Dream's eyes, before his collar was weakly tugged at, and their lips met each other's in a soft, meaningful kiss. It felt like an eternity since this had last happened, or maybe it was the first time all over again. It was hard to tell when, along with the usual eruption of butterflies and tingles that came with kissing Dream, he felt *certainty* for a delightful, scary change.

"You have no idea how much that means to me."

George hummed, smiling wider than he had in a long while, keeping himself from leaning back in and tasting the warmth of the other's mouth yet again. He will have more time for that.

"Sleep," George whispered. "You look like you could use some and I woke you up."

"I will, but can you do me a quick favor?"

"Anything," George promised.

He settled deeper into his bed, and George readjusted the covers.

"Can you check up on Saskia? And give her my thanks. I wanted to do that on my own but I don't think I can make it to her bed right now."

George raised a brow in question, and Dream caught onto his puzzlement. He still hadn't been told what went down in the forest they had all been rescued from.

"We couldn't catch that little fucker. He had led me into a literal *colony* of Death-Eaters, and I nearly collapsed defending myself when she and Thomas arrived. I think there were some others from the Ministry too," He gulped. "I was gonna die."

George promptly rubbed Dream's shoulder, and he felt the fingers around his own growing tighter.

"One of them aimed a Curse at me, and-" His breathing grew more ragged and George nearly wanted to ask him to stop, that this could be done later, but it would be futile. Dream wouldn't let go of it till he had it off of his chest. "-and it would've definitely hit me, but she didn't let it."

"What do you mean?"

Dream sighed, his tired eyes getting moist as he turned to look away from George. There were beginnings of panic strewn into the outlines of his face, the way his jaw set so tight and he blinked more frequently.

"She took it for me," he revealed. "I'm the reason she's in pain."

George shook his head, his fingers rubbing comfort into Dream's shoulder. The legs of a visitor's chair screeched against the ground somewhere, and he wondered if they'd let anyone see Saskia yet, if Thomas was okay or in a bed of his own.

"It was very kind of her," George spoke. "But you didn't *cause* any of it. She wanted to save you."

Dream sighed. George knew he did not quite believe that and how guilt ate away at his core. He'd come around someday, though, no matter how hard it was going to be. George had faith in that.

Wordlessly, he left his place, dropping a last, soft kiss on Dream's knuckles, almost as a promise to do what had been asked of him, and set out to find the Auror. The high ceilings, and thin curtains of the place seemed significantly less daunting, but the uneasiness still wasn't lost on him.

It reminded him of the time when he was in his first year at Hogwarts. He had fallen off of a broom the first time he had tried to mount it. He had scraped limbs and bloody palms, and a wounded ego upon making a fool out of himself in front of an entire class. He had been brought here then, and it had been a busy day quite like this one.

All he had feared then was having to sip on a bitter potion, and as soon as that part was done, he had felt lighter, but never completely *fine* , as Madam Pomfrey liked to ask.

“You cannot tell me what to do!” A familiar voice shouted from somewhere in the front.

George’s pace quickened.

Nearing the end of the Hall, he saw a commotion- two figures, quite like the ones guarding the hospital wing gates, held a struggling man between them, and, upon inching closer, he was greeted with the sight of an unruly Thomas, dark hair sticking out in every direction, eyes crimson and puffy, desperately pushing against his confines.

“I’m sorry,” Madam Pomfrey spoke. “But getting multiple opinions and threatening to incite violence won’t change the fact that she’s dead. She deserves a peaceful farewell, Thomas. Give her one.”

The men dropped Thomas as he sank to the ground, moving instead to the opposite ends of what was apparently Saskia’s bed. They hooked their arms under her covered body, sliding her onto the stretcher close by, and tears pricked the backs of George’s eyes as Thomas visibly broke down.

The wheels made a rumbling sound as Saskia was transported out of the Hall, and George rushed to kneel beside Thomas, pulling the man who looked more like the ghost of a boy than ever into his chest.

His heart ached for his loss, and he clenched his teeth together when he realized how easily this could’ve been him and Dream, if it hadn’t been for Saskia. His heart dropped with the weight of an unsaid, necessary *thanks* , and he held onto Thomas tighter.

“I loved her,” he sobbed. “She never knew it, but *God*, I loved her.”

George could only rub his palms against Thomas’s shaking arm, a puddle of tears sitting wet on the

wool of his sweater. There was nothing he could say, not when he couldn't imagine how one lived with such weight as unconfessed love? Forever?

"I'm so sorry," he whispered into Thomas's hair. "Is there anything that I can get you?"

*

George lost track of his days and nights, glued to Dream's bedside like he couldn't breathe anywhere else, and while the boy slept for most hours of the day, sometimes because he was tired, and at others, because of the Potions he'd been taking, it was fine. George didn't mind a single second of it.

He had insisted on changing Dream's bandages, feeding him the tasteless hospital meals, combing out the knots in his light hair every single morning, and dabbing away at the grease and sickness from his skin with a damp cloth till he was fit for a shower. He hardly ever went back to his dorm, and while their classmates fussed over their NEWTs approaching at godspeed, the two of them had been peacefully excused as promised.

Nick sat for hours with him sometimes, and Karl would tag along too, and even if Dream wasn't conscious for most of it, George liked to believe that he was listening to their mundane conversations.

And when it was just the two of them, he liked to whisper into Dream's ear, read him verses from books he liked, and new ones that he had wanted to read but never got to. Sometimes he asked about Saskia, and George never had it in him to tell him the truth. Madam Pomfrey thought that was the best thing to do for now too, and so whenever Dream would sleepily ask, "How's she?"

George would only say, "She's not in pain."

Because that wasn't a lie, even if it wasn't the truth Dream had asked for. Dream would surprisingly never push further, and even if George would sense him wishing to do it, he would gently pull out another topic from his sleeve, something he had unknowingly become skilled at as he grew up.

Sometimes when Dream was up and George would kiss him plainly because he wanted to, because he had missed feeling Dream close like that, the blond would shake his head, and say something along the lines of, "*I'm disgusting*," "*Don't you feel weird kissing me when I smell like nothing*

but medicines?”, “How’re you not puking when I’m pretty sure my mouth tastes rotten?”

And initially, George didn’t know what to tell him, but with time, he had tried to process an answer, connect the wayward wires inside of his head, and had learned to say, “You’d do it for me too.”

Dream never had a retort for this, because how did one refute the truth without going against themselves?

It was during one of these moments, that Dream had pulled away and mumbled out something anyone sick of being tied to a bed and left at the mercy of others would, “I don’t understand why you’d want to waste your time here, when you could be out there, living the life you deserve. You’ve had a rough time, George. It’ll do you good to go have some fun for once.”

And George was about to repeat the response he had conditioned himself to speak whenever Dream got like this, he was about to say, *“Because you’d do it for me too,”*

But it felt criminal. It felt dishonest and filthy and mundane, none of which Dream was, and before he could hold himself back, a choked whisper escaped him,

“Because I love you.”

Chapter End Notes

hi, this took so long but happy new year! <3
thank you for making my previous year amazing :)
please let me know what you think in the comments, thanks! <3

substance of glory

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Dream's breathing stopped for a long second, his surroundings dissolving into faint hues of cream, and lilac, and something more. He wondered if the pain-killing potions made one hallucinate too.

There sat George, hair messed, eyes wide, cheeks flushed, looking like the child of some ancient, beautiful God even when he wasn't at his best. He had never felt guiltier. He had never felt more incompetent. But still, George *loved* him. It's what he said moments ago, it's what was making the earth spin and the clouds float.

"C-Can you say that again?"

The lump in his throat had never been larger, and he was surprised that he could even make a sound. A chill began at the back of his ears and ran down the length of his spine. He felt faint. George's fingers slipped between his own, their palms meeting like sunflowers in the absence of sun. He shifted closer, lips quivering but coffee eyes full of purpose. Dream could hardly breathe.

"I love you," George whispered. "I'm bad at telling people that, especially for those that I mean it. But I'm in love with you-" George paused, resting his forehead against Dream's. "Don't cry, please."

Warm tears fell in arrhythmic drops upon their tangled hands, and Dream struggled to function. George pulled him into his chest, letting him shake, and writhe, and crumble down to a raw, vulnerable, unknown image of himself. This was what love did to one, he guessed. It tore you apart, and cracked every bone you had, only to be the sweetest healer and put you back together like nothing else ever could.

"I'm sorry, I can't- I just-" Dream choked on his words, only for George to press short, meaningful kisses into his hair, a constant chant of *it's okay, I'm here*, falling from his lips, marble hands rubbing warmth into his back.

Dream held onto his sweater for dear life, the familiar scent of parchment, and books, and something so inherently George that it could not be bottled doing a commendable job at grounding him. He knew love when he saw it, and this was it. George did love him, and no matter how many

millennia he needed to absorb that fact into his thick skull and thicker heart, he basked in the sheer sincerity of it.

“Holy shit, you literally just added so many years to my life,” Dream spoke when the initial fit had passed and George chuckled against his temple. “I was so scared.”

“Of?”

“Of being in love all alone. I would never have gotten over you either.”

George pulled back, their eyes meeting in a gaze so soft it made the cosmos look away. He smiled.

“You’re so dramatic,” He kissed Dream on the mouth- passionate, synchronous, heavy with things he’d tell Dream were they not in the middle of a hospital ward. “Lift your arms for me. I need to change your bandages.”

*

“Who the fuck was going to tell me that graduation caps were this annoying?” Nick groaned against Karl’s shoulder.

“They’re not. You just like to whine about everything.”

Today was a monumental day. If all went as George hoped, Madam Pomfrey would discharge Dream from the Wing, and they could take him back to his dorm, and also to their graduation. In another world, George would have been pumped about it, about finally putting all of this behind him, no matter how much he was going to miss a lot of it- the grounds, the common rooms, the Hogwarts Express, and even the little elves that made them tarts.

But in this one, all he felt was gratitude. For more things and people than he could consciously list. His last year here taught him that magic was more than just wands, spells, and potions. It didn’t live inside parchments or glass vials. It mixed with blood and coursed through veins. It came alight in the eyes of its bearer. It made a home in the arms of belief, and under the roof of love and patience- a lot of patience- it flourished.

He watched Dream go through the final rounds of her interrogation, moving his limbs as she instructed, filling out a sheet she set in front of him, and before he knew it, Dream was walking towards him.

“And before you leave,” Madam Pomfrey spoke. “Remember to include a lot of liquids in your diet, apply *all* the ointments that I’ve prescribed every night, except the one with the yellow packaging. That’s meant for using only once a week, and... am I forgetting something?” She asked, turning to look at the helper elf that stood by her feet, a clipboard and thermometer filling up its small arms.

It blinked up at her- large, watery eyes drowning in careful thought.

“And...” It began. “And happy Graduation!”

She chuckled, and George let go of his clenched jaw.

“Yeah, happy Graduation, boys.” She handed George a brown paper bag of what he supposed were the ointments. “Don’t let him drink a lot. He’s still not fit enough-”

“I don’t drink, chill.” Dream spoke, but one look at Madam Pomfrey’s face and he knew she didn’t buy it in the least.

George took his hand, the long sleeve of Dream’s robe, the thick, black Graduation velvet that George had helped him slip into, brushing against his own palm. He watched Nick look at them for a second too long, not being completely used to his best friend finally seeing someone after a long, dry spell.

“What I was thinking was that we could all go to the Three Broomsticks after the ceremony and grab butter beers or something,” Karl suggested as they walked out of the halls that smelled like potions, the looming gates that they wished none of them would have to go inside ever again. “It’s been a while since we hung out together.”

“What’re you going to do about the parents?” George asked.

He felt the warmth of Dream’s hand press tighter, till his own skin turned deathly pale, and his nerves sang with sweet suffocation.

“What?”

“Your mom’s going to be there?”

“Yeah,” George cocked a brow. “So is everybody else’s-”

And then it hit him like a rain shower of bricks. They had seen each other’s parents, heard the other talk about them, but to meet them as the other person’s *boyfriend*, was going to be an entirely different issue they’d have to deal with. Very shortly.

“Oh,” He muttered. “Yes-yes, she’s going to be there. My sister might tag along too. And yours?”

Dream gulped.

“In her last owl she said that it was just going to be her, but my family is... unpredictable. To say the least. I can’t say who’s going to be there and who’s not.”

“You guys need to chill,” Nick interrupted. “At least George can. Dream’s mom is a sweetheart.”

*

The ceremony was short, formal, grandiose, and exactly like what George had expected it to be. The four of them sat together, cheering for everyone as they got the little scroll of parchment that they hustled for years to earn.

Dream spotted his mother at the back of the room, clapping like her life depended on it as he limped to the stage. There was no one else, thankfully.

Professor McGonagall smiled up at him as she slipped the scroll into his hand, the too-bright flashes from the campus photographers threatening to blind him. Before he could leave, she held his wrist, turning to the watching public to speak about the quest, the *substance of glory*, the precious *feather in his cap*, and how brave he had been. She mentioned George, promising to

Speak about his part in it all when it was his turn to receive the honors. But what she said next was what had him close to losing his balance.

“And it was on this noble quest that we lost some of our people too. Our students had the fortune to work with them and learn so much more than what Hogwarts or any other place could’ve taught them.” She paused. “Saskia, a young Auror from the Ministry, a Hogwarts alumna herself, passed away a few nights ago in our hospital wing. I request two minutes of silence-”

Dream wasn’t listening to her anymore. Sweat collected in a thin sheen across his forehead, a terrible ringing resounding in his ears. His eyes found George’s in the crowd of keen people, drowning in chocolate guilt and useless explanations. Dream didn’t want any of that. George had known all along- he had known and he had kept Dream in the dark. And to find it all out like *this* , on a fucking stage of all places, at his own graduation ceremony seemed like a carefully put-together prank designed to make the world holler with laughter at his expense.

His insides felt powdery, fragile, and the urge to throw up was strong. Somehow, he held on till McGonagall was done speaking and permitted him to leave. It was hard to tell where the steps ended and the carpeted ground began. Heads turned to follow him as he strolled down the aisle parting the Hall in neat halves. This was supposed to be his victory parade but it felt more like a walk of shame. All of them thought that it was him who did the wonders, him who found the Death Eaters’ lair, who made it out of there- the brave, talented kid whose name deserved to be a constellation spreading across the sky.

They didn’t know how many died so he could have what he held right now. They didn’t have to live indebted to somebody who wasn’t even alive anymore. All they saw was a hero. All he knew was a loser.

He walked past the seats where his friends sat, making his way further down, until he reached his mother, her light hair so much like his own, falling in loose waves over her shoulders. Her smile dropped as soon as he neared her.

“What’s wrong?” She asked, slim fingers closing around his bicep, guiding him to take the seat beside her.

“Can we leave, please?”

It was nice to see her again.

*

It was the third owl that had made its way inside his room that week. Dream let it drop the letter into his lap, and with a sigh, he shut his window for good. It had been two whole weeks since they graduated, one week since he had heard back from the university he had always wanted to go to, and two days since the last owl George had sent him. But that streak had been broken, courtesy to the envelope that sat atop the fabric of his pants.

Since that day, he hadn't found it in himself to talk to anyone. His friends had been sending him owls, his siblings had been trying to take him out, his parents had been trying to get him to talk. But all of it was in vain.

He never answered any owls, didn't even read them, except for George's. He couldn't ignore those, no matter how much he wanted to. He didn't go out. He hardly talked. When the university acceptance had come in the mail, he hadn't jumped like he had expected himself to. Being on autopilot was how went about his days, as tragic and monotonous as that sounded. And the voices in his head had been louder than ever.

Dream,

I've been trying to reach you for weeks. I don't even know if you get my owls. But I'm hoping that you are. My Nugget is a smart bird.

All I ask is for a single chance to explain in person, everything that I should've explained to you earlier. I wrote about it all in the previous owls, but as I said, I don't know if you've got them. I was an asshole and I want to make amends. And I miss you. So much that I swear I hear your voice sometimes when I pass through the streets. I think you live in my pillow too. What else would explain all these dreams that you casually slip into?

I still love you. It's not going away. Even if you don't feel the same way about me anymore, and it kills me to not be around you.

My sister has written a book and I'm going to be at Flourish & Blotts tomorrow morning for the book-signing event. Please come. For my sanity. I promise to not bother you further. This shall be my last owl to you unless you resume further contact.

I'm sorry.

Yours,

George.

His lips parted, tears burning at the backs of his eyes, mind as numb as ever. He wasn't even mad at George anymore. The bitterness he had felt on stage, he had left it there. It didn't follow him out of that hall. He didn't allow it into his home.

His coldness had other roots, in places so deep and dark, he feared reaching down into them. He was wrapped in a spider's web, struggling to free his limbs, to breathe, to *live*. He had knit the web. He was the spider. There was nobody else he could blame.

*

George sat in a loveseat by the window, a book held lovingly in both hands. Dream had always loved how well he treated his books. There were a surprisingly large number of people in the bookshop, awaiting their turns to get their copies of the book signed by George's sister, who sat in the middle of the place, quill working tirelessly.

His heart was in his mouth. How did one explain dropping off of the face of the planet for two weeks?

The wooden ground let the heel of his boots tap against it, accentuating every step that he took, almost adding gravity to the potential conversation he was about to have.

George's hair had grown longer. It was the longest he had ever seen them. His glasses rested atop his nose, marble fingers caressing each page with so much love that Dream was nearly jealous. It was the first thing he had felt in a while that wasn't plain misery.

He looked up, his face splitting into a smile he failed to keep from escaping.

"You came."

George said it slow, tasting the two words, testing to see if they held meaning. He set his book down, standing up shakily. He had grown taller too. Just slightly.

“I did,” Dream smiled back, and finally, it didn’t feel like an act.

“How have you been?”

The question hung between them- bitter, heavy, and the mockery of a real *talk* . Dream did not want to pick it up. But this wasn’t an owl he could ignore. He knew what he was signing up for when he had decided to pay George a visit.

“Not my best self,” He sighed. “And you?”

“Not my best self either.”

Dream sat down in front of him, a mug of tea awaiting the touch of his wand to warm up. Outside, life went on like everything happening within their four walls didn’t hold a grain of significance. Maybe it didn’t. Maybe if he closed his eyes for long enough, it would all roll down to its inevitable end. He’d wake up when he really has to.

“Look, I can explain why I had to hide her death from you. Thank you for-”

“I know,” Dream interjected. “I read your owl. I’m not mad at you for anything, I promise.”

George looked like he would cry, or throw up, or both. His finger drew random, invisible shapes on the wooden surface of the table, something Dream had identified as a little self-soothing technique he had, and reached forward to place a gentle hand over George’s.

“And how long ago did you forgive me?”

“As soon as I realized the problem wasn’t with you or what you did. You were just looking out for me, and when Madam Pomfrey backed your approach, then it was only natural for you to... to hide all of that from me. You didn’t mean harm.”

“Then where did the problem lie?” George asked, his words catching in his throat, strangling his voice and breaking it in two. “Why did you leave?”

He sighed. This was the part he had been dreading. It wasn’t always the easiest to say *I just didn’t feel like it*, or *I don’t know*, without sounding like an asshole. He did not want to be the asshole, but what was his excuse?

“This is not going to sound good,” Dream began, fingers growing tighter around George’s, who squeezed back, and for a fleeting moment, he believed he might actually make this work. “I don’t know what went wrong with me, what’s *still* wrong with me. I can’t bring myself to talk to anyone. I have vivid, pathetic nightmares. Sometimes I wake up shaking, and it makes me feel like it’s the end. That I’m finally dying. Sometimes I can still smell the forest on me. The past couple of weeks have been textbook-definition crazy for me. I have everything I could possibly need right within an arm’s reach but-”

He paused, putting the hand that wasn’t holding George’s in his hair, pulling at his roots.

“But?”

“But I don’t want to reach for anything. I sound like an ungrateful douchebag right now but-”

“You don’t,” George spoke. “Believe me. You don’t.”

Silence covered them like a thin veil, drawing a partition between them and the others. Others who didn’t know how Dream’s hands shook or how George’s voice broke. Others who were better off without it, because the two of them were enough.

“You were an exception, though,” Dream confessed. “I only ever read owls from two people while I was, still am, on my little hiatus from life- the university that accepted me, and *you*. I know you have no reason to believe me when I say this, but I did miss you too. Terribly. I never even got to thank you properly for taking care of me at the hospital and look at what I gave you instead.”

George was shaking his head when he looked up, skin red and eyes so moist that he doubted he could even see through it all.

“You don’t have to. I did it because I wanted to do it.”

Dream nodded. Here it was. Everything he had been scared of saying out loud. And George had been so kind about it. He doubted if he even deserved all of that at this point.

“Thank you for listening to all of *this* . You’ve already helped me way more than you needed to.”

George sighed, his nails digging softly into the back of Dream’s hand. It felt nice to be touching him again.

“And I’ll do it a million times over,” George declared. “I love you. Deal with that.”

Dream’s heart skipped a beat any time he heard George say it, or even *write* it. This time was no exception.

“I love you too. You know that, right? I haven’t had the chance to say that to you a lot, but I hope you know.”

“I know.”

A stroll down to what George called *a secret spot* followed their conversation, and Dream felt light as a cloud. He thought he’d float. Minutes later, away from the Diagon Alley, they found themselves tucked into the heart of a bright meadow, thriving under the sun. Dream let himself lean into George, let George pull him closer and closer still, till their lips found each other again.

Urgent fingers fumbled with buttons, pulled at belts, and slipped inside waistbands. They stopped to pull themselves together, preparing to leave an open meadow and retreat to somewhere more private to resolve what they had started.

“Will you do something for me?” George asked as Dream closed the last button.

“Anything.”

“I know someone who could help with your nightmares, and... and the other stuff. You went through so much in so little time, it’s not a surprise that it’s taking a toll on you.”

Dream chuckled, pulling George in again and dropping a loose kiss to the corner of his mouth.

“Are you suggesting that I see a therapist?”

“Yes.”

Dream considered that for a long moment, his eyes transfixed on George’s face, drinking it all in like he might be an illusion. That if Dream blinked, he would go away.

“I will.”

“You will?” George nearly squealed, hands gripping Dream’s arms in an iron hold.

“Yes.” He smiled. “I have a marvelous story. The therapist will be charmed.”

Chapter End Notes

so, this is it. we're here. it's... done. it doesn't feel real no matter how many times i say it lol. but I'll get over the denial soon enough. thank you for being here and loving this work, and following it through till the end <3 i appreciate you so, so much.

i don't know when I'll publish a work again, but it will probably be soon. leave me a twitter follow to not miss out on that or sub to me on here :P

till we meet again!

iced <3

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!